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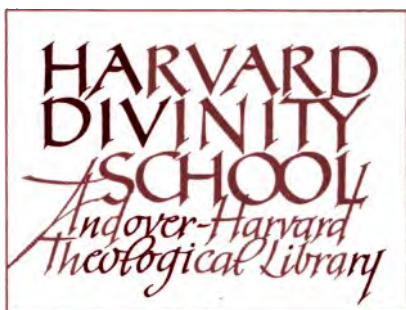
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THE
COMPLAINT;

OR

NIGHT THOUGHTS,

AND THE

Force of Religion.

BY EDWARD YOUNG, D. D.

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PREFACE.



As the occasion of this Poem was real, and not fictitious; so the method pursued in it was imposed by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than one premeditated or designed. Which will appear very plain from the nature of it. For it differs from the common mode of poetry; which is, from narrations to draw short morals. Here, contrary, the narrative is short, and the moral arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned naturally pour these moral reflections into the thought of the Writer.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

TO THE RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONSLOW, ESQ.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TIRED Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep !
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles ; the wretched he forsakes ;
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear. 5

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose
I wake : how happy they who wake no more !
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous ; where my wreck'd, desponding thought,
From wave to wave of fancied misery 11
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.
Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change !) severer for severe.
The Day too short for my distress ; and Night, 15
E'en in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess ! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world. 20
Silence how dead ! and darkness how profound !
Nor eye nor listening ear an object finds ;
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause ;
An awful pause ! prophetic of her end.

THE COMPLAINT.

er prophecy be soon fulfill'd :
rop the curtain ; I can lose no more.
ce and Darkness ! solemn sisters ! twins
ncient Night, who nurse the tender thought
ason, and on reason build resolve
column of true majesty in man,)
me : I will thank you in the grave ;
grave your kingdom : there this frame shall fall
ctim sacred to your dreary shrine.
what are ye ?—

30

35

hou who didst put to flight
mortal Silence, when the morning stars,
ulting, shouted o'er the rising ball ;
Thou ! whose word from solid darkness struck
hat spark, the Sun, strike wisdom from my soul ;
ly soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
as misers to their gold, while others rest.
Through this opaque of Nature and of Soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind
(A mind that fain would wander from its wee,)
Lead it through various scenes of life and death,
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.
Not less inspire my conduct than my song ;
Teach my best reason, reason ; my best will
Teach rectitude ; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrears :
Not let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be poured in vain.
The bell strikes one. We take no note of tir
But from its loss : to give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours.
Where are they ? With the years beyond the
It is the signal that demands despatch :
How much is to be done ! My hopes and
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow

IFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY. 7

on—on what ? A fathomless abyss.
eternity ! how surely mine ! 65
eternity belong to me,
sioner on the bounties of an hour ?
or, how rich, how abject, how august,
plicate, how wonderful, is man !
ing wonder He who made him such ! 70
red in our make such strange extremes !
erent natures marvellously mix'd,
a exquisite of distant worlds !
sh'd link in being's endless chain !
rom nothing to the Deity ! 75
thereal, sullied and absorb'd !
ullied and dishonour'd, still divine !
ature of greatness absolute !
f glory ! a frail child of dust !
mmortal ! insect infinite ! 80
A god !—I tremble at myself,
yself am lost. At home a stranger,
wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,
ering at her own. How Reason reels !
miracle to man is man ! 85
ntly distress'd ! what joy ! what dread !
y transported and alarm'd ;
preserve my life ! or what destroy .
arm can't snatch me from the grave ;
angels can't confine me there. 90
conjecture ; all things rise in proof :
my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spreads,
gh my soul fantastic measures trod
fields, or mourn'd along the gloom
s woods, or down the craggy steep 95
dlong, swam with pain the mantled pool,
he cliff, or danced on hollow winds
shapes, wild natives of the brain !
ess flight, though devious, speaks her nature
essence than the trodden clod ; 100
al, towering, unconfined,

Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
 E'en silent Night proclaims my soul immortal :
 E'en silent Night proclaims eternal day !
 For human weal Heaven husbands all events : 105
 Dull Sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore, that are not lost ?
 Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around
 In infidel distress ? Are angels there ?
 Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire ? 110

They live ! they greatly live ! a life on earth
 Unkindled, unconceived, and from an eye
 Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
 On me, more justly number'd with the dead.
 This is the desert, this the solitude : 115

How populous, how vital is the grave !
 This is Creation's melancholy vault,
 The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom ;
 The land of apparitions, empty shades !
 All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond 120
 Is substance ; the reverse is Folly's creed.
 How solid all, where change shall be no more !

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule :
 Life's theatre, as yet is shut ; and Death, 125
 Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,
 This gross impediment of clay remove,
 And make us, embryos of existence, free.

From real life but little more remote
 Is he, not yet a candidate for light, 130
 The future embryo, slumbering in his sire.
 Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,
 Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
 The life of gods, O transport ! and of man.

Yet man, fool man ! here buries all his thoughts,
 Inters celestial hopes without one sigh : 135
Prisoner of earth and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes ; wing'd by Heaven
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY. 9

Where seraphs gather immortality. 140

On Life's fair tree fast by the throne of God,

What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow

In His full beam, and ripen for the just,

Where momentary ages are no more !

Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire !

And is it in the flight of threescore years 146

To push eternity from human thought,

And smother souls immortal in the dust ?

A soul immortal, spending all her fires,

Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness, 150

Thrown into tumult, raptured, or alarm'd

At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,

Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,

To waft a feather or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure ? it o'erwhelms myself ;

How was my heart instructed by the world ! 156

O how self-fetter'd was my grovelling soul !

How like a worm, was I wrapp'd round and round

In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,

Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er 160

With soft conceit of endless comfort here,

Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies !

Night visions may befriend (as sung above :)

Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dream'd,

Of things impossible ! (could sleep do more ?) 165

Of joys perpetual in perpetual change !

Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave ;

Eternal sunshine in the storms of life !

How richly were my noontide trances hung

With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys, 170

Joy behind joy, in endless perspective :

Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue

Calls daily for his millions at a meal,

Starting I woke, and found myself undone.

Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture ? 175

The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall

Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me !

The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss: it breaks at every breeze.

O ye bless'd scenes of permanent delight!
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodged above these rolling spheres,
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour,
And rarely for the better; or the best
More mortal than the common births of Fate.
Each moment has its sickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes empires from the root; each moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!
Implicit treason to divine decree!
A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The Sun himself by thy permission shines,
And; one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?
Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her
O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament

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... while we clasp we kill to
To worse than simple misery
Revolted joys, like foes in civil
Like bosom friendships to resee
With rage envenom'd rise again
Beware what earth calls happiness
All joys but joys that never can
Who builds on less than an immortal
Fond as he seems, condemns his

Mine died with thee, Philander
Dissolved the charm; the disenchanted
Lost all her lustre. Where her golden
Her golden mountains where? all
To naked waste; a dreary vale of
The great magician's dead! Thou
Of outcast earth, in darkness: where
From yesterday! Thy darling hope
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how am I
Thy glowing cheek! ambition true
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working
Smiled at thy well concerted scheme
The worm to riot on thy

DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY. 15

alt out by particles, and each
ed with the streaming sands of life.
Invioable oath is sworn 370

ce,—where Eternity begins.
re's law, what may be may be now ;
prerogative in human hours.
hearts what bolder thought can rise
s presumption on to-morrow's dawn? 375

o-morrow? In another world.
rs this is certain ; the reverse
one ; and yet on this *perhaps*,
venture, infamous for lies,
ck of adamant, we build 380

ain hopes, spin out eternal schemes,
Fatal Sisters could outspin,
ith life's futurities, expire.

Philander had bespoke his shroud ;
cause ; a warning was denied. 385
fall as sudden, not as safe !

though for years admonish'd home ;
ills the last extreme beware ;
orenzo ! a slow, sudden death :
ful that deliberate surprise ! 390

-day ; 'tis madness to defer :
he fatal precedent will plead ;
all wisdom is push'd out of life.

ation is the thief of time ;
year it steals, till all are fled, 395
mercies of a moment leaves

oncerns of an eternal scene.
equent, would not this be strange ?
o frequent, this is stranger still.

s miraculous mistakes this bears 400
'That all men are about to live,'
n the brink of being born :

emselves the compliment to think
lay shall not drive, and their pride
ersion takes up ready praise ; 405

At least their own ; their future selves applaud
 How excellent that life they ne'er will lead !
 Time lodged in their own hands is Folly's vails
 That lodged in Fate's to wisdom they consign ;
 The thing they can't but purpose they postpone
 'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,
 And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
 All promise is poor dilatory man,
 And that through every stage. When young, i
 In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
 Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,
 As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.
 At thirty man suspects himself a fool ;
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan ;
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve ;
 In all the magnanimity of thought
 Resolves, and re-resolves ; then dies the same.

And why ? because he thinks himself immortal
 All men think all men mortal but themselves ;
 Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate
 Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air
 Soon close ; where pass'd the shaft no trace is left
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death :
 E'en with the tender tear which Nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget Philander ? that were strange !
 O my full heart !—But should I give it vent,
 The longest night, though longer far, would fail
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.
 The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my brow
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel ! like
And call the stars to listen : every star

N LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY. 17

af to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.

e not vain ; there are who thine excel, 445

charm through distant ages. Wrapp'd in shade,

ner of darkness ! to the silent hours

often I repeat their rage divine,

ll my griefs, and steal my heart from woe !

their raptures, but not catch their fire. 450

, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides !

Milton ! thee ; ah, could I reach your strain !

s* who made Mæonides our own.

too, he sung : immortal man I sing :

ursts my song beyond the bounds of life : 455

t, now, but immortality can please ?

d he press'd his theme, pursued the track

h opens out of darkness into day !

d he mounted on his wing of fire,

d where I sink, and sung immortal man, 460

had it bless'd mankind, and rescued me !

* Pope.

NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

'WHEN the cock crew, he wept,'—smote by that ey
Which looks on me, on all; that Power who bids
This midnight sentinel, with clarion shrill,
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
Rouse souls from slumber, into thoughts of Heaven.
Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?

And fortitude abandon'd, where is man?

I know the terms on which he sees the light:

He that is born is listed: life is war;

Eternal war with woe: who bears it best

Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.

Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee;

And thine on themes may profit; profit there

Where most thy need. Themes, too, the genuir
growth

Of dear Philander's dust. He thus, though dead, 1
May still befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrou
price,

Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene.

So could I touch these themes as might obtain

Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengaged,

The good deed would delight me; half impress 2

On my dark cloud an Iris, and from grief

Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?

I know thou say'st it: says thy life the same?

7. mourns the dead who lives as they desire.

DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 19

st, that avarice of Time, 25
e !) .thought of death inspires,
eries endear our gold ?
ld more sacred ; more a load
s, and fools reputed wise.
nted man without account ? 30
quander'd, Wisdom's debt unpaid ?
s all due to that discharge.
es in wait, he's at the door ;
should his strong hand arrest,
ts the prisoner free, 35
ble chain
ngeance claims the full arrear.
lder'd on the brink ! how late
last refuge in despair !
, O Mead ! to thee I owe ; 46
thee with eternity.
answers my desire :
mortal, past thy cure.
-that dies not with my strain.
thy disease, Lorenzo ? not 45
ut for moral aid.
olly to be wise too soon.
in time ; it may be poor :
th money, sparing ; pay
a purchase of its worth ; 50
th ; ask deathbeds ; they can tell.
n life, reluctant ; big
nobler time to come ;
d, still nearer the great mark
s, virtue more divine. 55
; wisdom, glory, gain ?
nign in vital union binds)
the natives of the bough,
inspire ? Amusement reigns,
ad : to trifle is to live : 60
ids, too, to die ?
each, Lorenzo ! 'tis confess'd.

As lands and cities with their glit

To the poor shatter'd bark, by su

Thrown off to sea, and soon to pe

Will toys amuse? No; thrones wi

And carth and skies seem dust up

Redeem we time?—Its loss we d

What pleads Lorenzo for his high

He pleads Time's numerous blank

The strawlike trifles on Life's com

From whom those blanks and trifles

No blank, no trifle Nature made or n

Virtue, or purposed virtue, still be th

This cancels thy complaint at once;

In act no trifle, and no blank in time

This greatens, fills, immortalizes all

This the bless'd art of turning all to

This the good heart's prerogative to

A royal tribute from the poorest hou

Immense revenue! every moment p

If nothing more than purpose in thy

Thy purpose firm is equal to the dee

Who does the best his circumstance

Does well, etc.

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 21

Had been an emperor without his crown. 100

Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:

He spoke as if deputed by mankind.

So should all speak: so reason speaks in all

From the soft whispers of that God in man,

Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly, 105

For rescue from the blessings we possess?

Time, the supreme!—Time is Eternity;

Pregnant with all eternity can give;

Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.

Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth 110

A power ethereal, only not adored.

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself

Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!

Like children babbling nonsense in their sports

We censure Nature for a span too short; 115

That span too short we tax as tedious too;

Torture invention, all expedients tire,

To lash the lingering moments into speed,

And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.

Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer, 120

(For Nature's voice unstifled would recal)

Drives headlong towards the precipice of death;

Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful made

O what a riddle of absurdity!

Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot wheels: 125

How heavily we drag the load of life!

Bless'd leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,

It makes us wander, wander earth around,

To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd

The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour: 130

We cry for mercy to the next amusement;

The next amusement mortgages our fields;

Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,

From hateful time if prisons set us free.

Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief, 135

We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,

Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd :
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)
 Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
 And seems to creep, decrepit with his age, 140
 Behold him when pass'd by ; what then is seen
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds ?
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
 Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills ; 145
 To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.
 Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense ;
 No niggard Nature, men are prodigals.
 We waste, not use our time ; we breathe, not live.
 Time wasted is existence ; used, is life : 150
 And bare existence man, to live ordain'd,
 Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.
 And why ? since time was given for use, not waste,
 Enjoin'd to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,
 To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man. 155
 Time's use was doom'd a pleasure, waste a pain,
 That man might feel his error if unseen,
 And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure ;
 Not, blundering, split on idleness for ease. 159
 Life's cares are comforts ; such by Heaven design'd ;
 He that has none must make them, or be wretched.
 Cares are employments, and without employ
 The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest,
 To souls most adverse, action all their joy.

Here then the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds ; 165
 Then Time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
 We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan ;
 We thwart the Deity ; and 'tis decreed,
 Who thwart His will shall contradict their own.
 Hence our unnatural quarrels with ourselves ; 170
 Our thoughts at enmity ; our bosom-broil :
We push Time from us, and we wish him back :
Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life :

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 23

we think long and short, death seek and shun :
and soul, like peevish man and wife, 175
d jar, and yet are loath to part.
the dark days of vanity ! while here
tasteless ! and how terrible when gone !
? they ne'er go ; when pass'd, they haunt us still.
spirit walks of every day deceased, 180
smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
death nor life delight us. If time past
time possess'd both pain us, what can please ?
which the Deity to please ordain'd,
used. The man who consecrates his hours 185
vigorous effort and an honest aim,
ice he draws the sting of life and death ;
talks with Nature, and her paths are peace.
r error's cause and cure are seen : see next
s nature, origin, importance, speed, 190
thy great gain from urging his career,—
usual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
looks on Time as nothing. Nothing else
ly man's ; 'tis Fortune's.—Time's a god !
thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence ? 195
or against, what wonders can he do !
will ; to stand blank neuter he disdains.
n those terms was Time (Heaven's stranger !) sent
s important embassy to man.
azo ! no : on the long-destined hour, 200
everlasting ages growing ripe,
memorable hour of wondrous birth,
the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,
big with Nature, rising in his might,
forth Creation (for then Time was born) 205
odhead streaming through a thousand worlds ;
n those terms, from the great days of Heaven,
old Eternity's mysterious orb
Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;
kies, which watch him in his new abode, 210
ring his motions by revolving spheres,

That horologe machinery divine.

Hours, days, and months, and years, his children

Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies ;

Or rather, as unequal plumes they shape

His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,

To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,

And join anew Eternity, his sire ;

In his immutability to nest,

When worlds, that count his circles new, unhir

(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush

To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy ? why with levities

New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight

Know'st thou or what thou dost, or what is done

Man flies from Time, and Time from man : too

In sad divorce, this double flight must end ;

And then where are we ? where, Lorenzo ! then

Thy sports, thy pomps ? I grant thee in a state

Not unambitious ; in the ruffled shroud,

Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.

Has Death his fopperies ? then well may Life

Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well array'd ! ye lilies of our land !

Ye lilies male ! who neither toil nor spin,

(As sister-lilies might) if not so wise

As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight !

Ye delicate ! who nothing can support,

Yourselves most insupportable ! for whom

The winter-rose must blow, the Sun put on

A brighter beam in Leo ; silky-soft,

Favonious ! breathe still softer, or be chid ;

And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,

And robes, and notions, framed in foreign looms

O ye Lorenzos of our age ! who deem

One moment unamused a misery

Not made for feeble man ! who call aloud

For every bauble drivell'd o'er by sense ;

For rattles and conceits of every cast ;

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 25

For change of follies and relays of joy, 250

To drag your patient through the tedious length

Of a short winter's day—say, sages! say,

Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!

How will you weather an eternal night,

Where such expedients fail?— 255

O treacherous Conscience! while she seems to sleep

On rose and myrtle, lull'd with siren song;

While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop

On headlong Appetite the slacken'd rein,

And give us up to license, unrecall'd, 260

Unmark'd: see, from behind her secret stand,

The sly informer minutes every fault,

And her dread diary with horror fills.

Not the gross act alone employs her pen;

She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band. 265

A watchful foe! the formidable spy

Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,

Our dawning purposes of heart explores,

And steals our embryos of iniquity. 270

As all-rapacious usurers conceal

Their doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs;

Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats

Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,

Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied;

In leaves more durable than leaves of brass 275

Writes our whole history, which Death shall read

In every pale delinquent's private ear,

And judgment publish, publish to more worlds

Than this, and endless age in groans resound.

Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast; 280

Such is her slumber, and her vengeance such

For slighted counsel; such thy future peace;

And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?

But why on time so lavish is my song?

On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school 285

To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;

Each morn are born anew: each day a life!

And shall we kill each day ? If trifling kills,
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain
 Cry out for vengeance on us ! Time destroy'd 290
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
 Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heaven invites,
 Hell threatens : all exerts ; in effort all,
 More than creation, labours ! Labours more ?
 And is there in creation what, amidst 295
 This tumult universal, wing'd despatch,
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns ?—
 Man sleeps, and man alone ; and man, whose fate,
 Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
 Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf 300
 A moment trembles ; drops ! and man, for whom
 All else is in alarm ; man, the sole cause
 Of this surrounding storm ! and yet he sleeps,
 As the storm rock'd to rest !—Throw years away ?
 Throw empires, and be blameless : moments seize, 305
 Heaven's on their wing ; a moment we may wish,
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still
 Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
 The period past, regive the given hour.
 Lorenzo ! more than miracles we want. 310
 Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come !

Such is the language of the man awake,
 His ardour such for what oppresses thee.
 And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo ? No ;
 That more than miracle the gods indulge. 315
 To-day is yesterday return'd ; return'd
 Full power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
 And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
 Let it not share its predecessor's fate,
 Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool. 320
 Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off
 Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still ?
 Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd ?
 More wretched for the clemencies of Heaven ?
 Where shall I find him ? Angels ! tell me where

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 27

You know him: he is near you; point him out.
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?
Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed
Protection; now are waving in applause. 330
To that bless'd son of foresight! lord of Fate!
That awful independent on to-morrow!
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;
Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile,
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly; 335
That common but opprobrious lot! Past hours,
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave;
All feeling of futurity benumb'd;
All godlike passion for eternals quench'd; 340
All relish of realities expired;
Renounced all correspondence with the skies;
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust; 345
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;
Imbruted every faculty divine;
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,
The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire 350
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters
changed;
Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.
Such veneration due, O man to man!
Who venerate themselves the world despise. 355
For what, gay friend! is this escutcheon'd world,
Which hangs out death in one eternal night?
A night that glooms us in the noontide ray,
And wraps our thoughts at banquets in the shroud.
Life's little stage is a small eminence, 360
Inch high the grave above, that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around

We read their monuments ; we sigh ; and while
 We sigh we sink ; and are what we deplored :
 Lamenting or lamented all our lot !

86

Is Death at distance ? No ; he has been on thee,
 And given sure earnest of his final blow.
 Those hours that lately smiled, where are they now ?
 Pallid to thought, and ghastly ! drown'd, all drown'd
 In that great deep which nothing disembogues ! 37
 And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.
 The rest are on the wing : how fleet their flight !
 Already has the fatal train took fire ;
 A moment, and the world's blown up to thee ;
 The Sun is darkness, and the stars are dust. 37

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
 And ask them what report they bore to Heaven,
 And how they might have borne more welcome news
 Their answers form what men Experience call ;
 If Wisdom's friend, her best ; if not, worst foe. 38
 O reconcile them ! kind Experience cries,
 ' There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs ;
 The more our joy, the more we know it vain,
 And by success are tutor'd to despair.'

Nor is it only thus, but must be so. 39
 Who knows not this, though gray, is still a child.
 Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire ;
 Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,
 Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes ?
 Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth
 Light as the summer's dust, we take in air
 A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,
 Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
 And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more ;
 Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrew
 We, sore amazed, from out earth's ruins crawl,
 And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
 As man's own choice, (controller of the skies !)
 As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,

ME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 29

ipotent is Time !) decrees ;
each warning give a strong alarm ?
r less than that of bosom torn
t, bleeding o'er the sacred dead !
each dial strike us as we pass, 405
as the written wall which struck,
ht bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
gh flush'd with insolence and wine ?
he dial speaks, and points to thee,
ath to break thy banquet up :— 410
hy kingdom is departing from thee,
it lasts, is emptier than my shade.
nguage such ; nor need'st thou call
o decipher what it means.
the Median, Fate is in thy walls : 415
w ? whence ? Belshazzar-like, amazed :
e encloses the sure seeds of death ;
he murderer : ingrate ! he thrives
a meal, and then his nurse devours.
, Lorenzo, the delusion lies ; 420
shadow, as it measures life,
ables too. Life speeds away
to point, though seeming to stand still.
ig fugitive is swift by stealth :
is the movement to be seen ; 425
an's hour is up, and we are gone.
point out our danger ; gnomons, time :
e useless when the Sun is set,
ut when more glorious Reason shines.
ould judge in all ; in Reason's eye 430
tary shadow travels hard ;
ur gravitation to the wrong,
ur hearts to whisper what we wish,
with the wise than he's aware.
gton goes slower than the Sun ; 435
unkind mistake their time of day ;
tself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
brows. So gentle life's descent,

THE COMPLAINT

Shut our eyes, and think it is a plan.
 To take fair days in winter for the spring,
 To turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
 We must compute that age he cannot feel,
 Scarce believes he's older for his years.
 Thus at life's latest eve we keep in store
 The disappointment sure, to crown the rest,
 The disappointment of a promised hour.
 On this, or similar, Philander! thou
 Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue
 And strong to wield all science worth the name,
 How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,
 And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!
 How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve
 By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,
 Best found so sought, to the recluse more coy!
 Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip;
 Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,
 Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;
 Song, fashionably fruitless, such as stains
 The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires,
 Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contain
 As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flower
 So men from Friendship, wisdom and delight;
 Twins, tied by Nature; if they part, they die.
 Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad?
 Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up
 And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.
 Had thought been all, sweet speech had been
 Speech! thought's canal; speech! thought's
 too:

Thought in the mine may come forth gold,
 When coin'd in word, we know its real worth
 If sterling, store it for thy future use;
 'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.
 Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more pos-
 Teaching we learn; and giving we re-

ON TIME; DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 31

The births of intellect ; when dumb, forgot.
 Speech ventilates our intellectual fire ;
 Speech burnishes our mental magazine ;
 Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
 What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie 480
 Plunged to the hilts in venerable tomes,
 And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,
 And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech,
 If born bless'd heirs of half their mother's tongue ! 484
 'Tis thought's exchange, which like the alternate push
 Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
 And defecates the student's standing pool.
 In contemplation is his proud resource ?
 'Tis poor as proud, by converse unsustain'd.
 Rude thought runs wild in Contemplation's field ; 490
 Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
 Of due restraint ; and Emulation's spur
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals awed.
 'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
 As exercise for salutary rest : 495
 By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves ;
 And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone
 Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,
 And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
 What is she but the means of happiness ? 500
 That unobtain'd, than Folly mere a fool ;
 A melancholy fool, without her bells.
 Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives
 The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.
 Nature, in zeal for human amity, 505
 Denies or damps an undivided joy.
 Joy is an import : joy is an exchange ;
 Joy flies monopolists ; it calls for two :
 Rich fruit ! Heaven-planted ! never pluck'd by one.
 Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give 510
 To social man true relish of himself.
 Fall on ourselves descending in a line,
 Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight.

Delight intense is taken by rebound ;
 Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

5

Celestial Happiness ! whene'er she stoops
 To visit Earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
 And one alone, to make her sweet amends
 For absent Heaven—the bosom of a friend ;
 Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
 Each other's pillow to repose divine
 Beware the counterfeit ; in passion's flame
 Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
 True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe :
 Virtue alone entenders us for life ;
 I wrong her much—entenders us for ever.
 Of Friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
 Is Virtue kindling at a rival fire,
 And emulously rapid in her race.
 O the soft enmity ! endearing strife !
 This carries Friendship to her noontide point,
 And gives the rivet of eternity.

5

5

5

From Friendship, which outlives my former theme
 Glorious survivor of old Time and Death !
 From Friendship, thus, that flower of heavenly seed
 The wise extract earth's most hyblean bliss,
 Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

5

But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower ?
 Abroad they find who cherish it at home.
 Lorenzo ! pardon what my love extorts,
 An honest love, and not afraid to frown.
 Though choice of follies fasten on the great,
 None clings more obstinate than fancy fond,
 That sacred friendship is their easy prey
 Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,
 Or fascination of a highborn smile.

5

5

Their smiles the great, and the coquette, throw out
 For others' hearts, tenacious of their own ;
 And we no less of ours, when such the bait.

*Ye Fortune's cofferers ! ye powers of Wealth !
 Can gold gain friendship ? impudence of hope*

TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 83

ere man an angel might beget.
I love only, is the loan for love.
pride repress, nor hope to find
but what has found a friend in thee : 555
ne purchase, few the price will pay ;
makes friends such miracles below
(since daring on so nice a theme)
ee friendship delicate as dear,
violations apt to die ? 560
ill wound it, and distrust destroy.
on all things with thy friend :
friends grow not thick on every bough
friend unrotten at the core,
y friend deliberate with thyself ; 565
der, sift ; not eager in the choice,
s of the chosen : fixing, fix ;
re friendship, then confide till death.
y friend, but nobler far for thee.
at danger for earth's highest prize ! 570
worth all hazards we can run:
o friendless master of a world ;
purchase for a friend is gain.
he (angels hear that angel sing .
n friendship gather half their joy) 575
iland, as his friend went round
ichor, in the generous blood
s, purple god of joyous wit,
ate, and ever laughing eye.
ong health and virtue to his friend ; 580
who warm'd him more, who more inspired.
s the wine of life ; but friendship new
vas his) is neither strong nor pure.
bright complexion, cordial warmth,
ng spirit of a friend, 585
summers ripening by my side ;
e of falsehood long thrown down,
rtues rising in his soul,
ear, and smiling as they rise !

Here nectar flows ; it sparkles in our sight :
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.
 High-flavour'd bliss for gods ! on earth how rare !
 On earth how, lost !—Philander is no more.

Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song ?
 Am I too warm ?—Too warm I cannot be.
 I loved him much, but now I love him more.
 Like birds, whose beauties languish, half conceal'd
 Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
 Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold ;
 How blessings brighten as they take their flight !
 His flight Philander took, his upward flight,
 If ever soul ascended. Had he dropp'd,
 (That eagle genius !) O had he let fall
 One feather as he flew, I then had wrote
 What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,
 Rivals scarce-damn, and Zoilus reprieve.
 Yet what I can I must : it were profane
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
 Strange ! the theme most affecting, most sublime,
 Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung !
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawaked,
 Paimon or Christian, to the blush of Wit.
 Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,
 The deathbed of the just ! is yet undrawn
 By mortal hand ; it merits a divine :
 Angels should paint it, angels ever there,
 There on a post of honour and of joy.
 Dare I presume, then ? but Philander bids,
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls.
 Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath
 Aerial groves' impenetrable gloom,
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,
 Or gazing, by pale lamps, on highborn dust
 In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings,
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.
It is religion to proceed : I pause—

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP. 83

enter, awed, the temple of my theme.
his deathbed? No; it is his shrine:
ld him there just rising to a god. 630
e chamber where the good man meets his fate
vileged beyond the common walk
rtuous life, quite in the verge of Heaven.
ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,
ive the blessing, and adore the chance. 635
threw in this Bethesda your disease:
restored by this, despair your cure;
ere resistless Demonstration dwells.
thbed's a detector of the heart!
tired Dissimulation drops her mask, 640
igh Life's grimace that mistress of the scene!
real and apparent are the same.
ee the man, you see his hold on Heaven,
nd his virtue, as Philander's sound.
en waits not the last moment; owns her friends
is side death, and points them out to men; 645
ure silent, but of sovereign power!
ce confusion, and to Virtue peace.
atever farce the boastful hero plays,
e alone has majesty in death; 650
reater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
ider! he severely frown'd on thee.
arning given! unceremonious fate!
den rush from life's meridian joys!
nch from all we love! from all we are! 655
less bed of pain! a plunge opaque
d conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!
; Reason's shudder at the dark unknown!
extinguish'd! a just opening grave! 659
h! the last, the last; what? (can words express,
ght reach it?) the last—silence of a friend!
are those horrors, that amazement, where
ideous group of ills which singly shock?
d from man—I thought him man, till now. 664
gh Nature's wreck, through vanquish'd agonies,

(Like the stars struggling through this midnight gloom
What gleams of joy ! what more than human peace
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm ?

No, not in death the mortal to be found.

His conduct is a legacy for all,

6

Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.

His comforters he comforts ; great in ruin,

With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields

His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burn'd within us at the scene ! 67

Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man ?

His God sustains him in his final hour !

His final hour brings glory to his God !

Man's glory Heaven vouchsafes to call her own.

We gaze, we weep ; mix'd tears of grief and joy ! 68

Amazement strikes : devotion bursts to flame :

Christians adore ! and infidels believe !

As some tall tower, or lofty mountain's brow,

Detains the Sun, illustrious, from its height,

While rising vapours and descending shades, 68

With damps and darkness, drown the spacious vale :

Undamp'd by doubt, undarken'd by despair,

Philander thus augustly rears his head,

At that black hour which general horror sheds

On the low level of the inglorious throng :

69

Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy

Divinely beam on his exalted soul ;

Destruction gild and crown him for the skies,

With incommunicable lustre bright.

NIGHT III.

Narcissa.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF PORTLAND.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.

VINO.

From dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze runs mad,
To Reason, that heaven-lighted lamp in man,
Once more I wake ; and at the destined hour,
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
I keep my assignation with my woe. 5

O ! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul ;
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet ! communion large and high !
Our reason, guardian-angel, and our God ! 10
Then nearest these, when others most remote ;
And all, ere long, shall be remote but these :
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,
A stranger ! unacknowledged ! unapproved !
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast ; 15
To win thy wish creation has no more :
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.—

But friends how mortal ! dangerous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards !
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain head,
And reeling through the wilderness of joy,

Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.

My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,

Unlike the Deity my song invokes.

I to day's soft-eyed sister pay my court

(Endymion's rival,) and her aid implore,

Now first implored in succour to the Muse.

Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's* form,

And modestly forego thine own : O thou

Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire !

Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song ?

As thou her crescent, she thy character

Assumes ; still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits who dare dispute

This revolution in the world inspired ?

Ye train Pierian ! to the lunar sphere,

In silent hour, address your ardent call

For aid immortal, less her brother's right.

She with the spheres harmonious nightly leads

The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,

A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.

Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of Heaven !

What title or what name endears thee most ?

Cynthia ! Cyllene ! Phœbe—or dost hear

With higher gust, fair Portland of the skies ?

Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,

More powerful than of old Circean charm ?

Come, but from heavenly banquets with thee bring

The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear

The theft divine ; or in propitious dreams

(For dreams are thine) transfuse it through the

Of thy first votary—but not thy last,

If, like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme

A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,

Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair !

A theme that rose all pale, and told my story

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade

NARCISSA.

t ; on her fond hopes perpetual night ;
 ich struck a damp, a deadlier damp 69
 which smote me from Philander's tomb !
 lows ere his tomb is closed.
 or ; rare are solitary woes ;
 train ; they tread each other's heel ;
 nvades his mournful right, and claims 65
 at started from my lids for him ;
 faithless, alienated tear,
 ere it falls. So frequent Death,
 more than causes, he confounds ;
 sighs his rival strokes contend, 70
 mistress distraction. Oh, Philander !
 by fate ? a double fate to me !
 plain ! a menace and a blow !
 ck raven hovering o'er my peace,
 ird of omen than of prey. 75
 cissa long before her hour ;
 tender soul by break of bliss,
 st blossom, from the buds of joy ;
 ur noxious fate unblasted leaves,
 ment clime of human life. 80
 monist ! and beautiful as sweet !
 as beautiful ! and soft as young !
 soft ! and innocent as gay !
 (if aught happy here) as good !
 fond had built her nest on high. 85
 uite exquisite of note and plume,
 y Fate (who loves a lofty mark)
 ne summit of the grove she fell,
 nharmonious ! all its charm
 d in the wonders of her song ! 90
 ll vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
 ; there, and with voluptuous pain
 her !) thrilling through my heart.
 uty, youth, love, virtue, joy ! this group
 as, flowers of Paradise, 95
 e it ! in one blazo we bind,

Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all
We guess of Heaven ! and these were all her own ;
And she was mine ; and I was—was !—most bless'd—
Gay title of the deepest misery ! 10

As bodies grow more ponderous robb'd of life,
Good lost weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.
Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay ;
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there ; 10
Far lovelier ! pity swells the tide of love.
And will not the severe excuse a sigh ?

Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep.
Our tears indulged indeed deserve our shame.
Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me ! 11

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,
And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,
Pale Omen sat, and scattered fears around
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze 11
That once had seen ?) with haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the Sun ; the Sun
(As if the Sun could envy) check'd his beam, 12
Denied his wonted succour ; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
Of lilies ; fairest lilies, not so fair !

Queen lilies ! and ye painted populace
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives ! 12
In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,
And outblush (mine excepted) every fair ;
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
Which often cropp'd your odours, incense meet 13
To thought so pure ! Ye lovely fugitives !

Coeval race with man ! for man you smile :

*Why not smile at him too ? You share, indeed,
His sudden pass ; but not his constant pain.*

So man is made, nought ministers delight, 135
 But what his glowing passions can engage ;
 And glowing passions, bent on aught below,
 Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale ;
 And anguish after rapture, how severe !
 Rapture ? bold man ! who tempts the wrath divine, 140
 By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,
 While here presuming on the rights of Heaven.
 For transport dost thou call on every hour,
 Lorenzo ? At thy friend's expense be wise :
 Lean not on earth ; 'twill pierce thee to the heart ;
 A broken reed at best ; but oft a spear : 146
 On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.
 Turn, hopeless thought ! turn from her.—Thought
 Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe. [repell'd
 Snatch'd ere thy prime ! and in thy bridal hour ! 150
 And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smiled !
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh opening joys !
 And when blind man pronounced thy bliss complete !
 And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept !
 Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still, 155
 Strangers to kindness wept. Their eyes let fall
 Inhuman tears ; strange tears ! that trickled down
 From marble hearts ! obdurate tenderness !
 A tenderness that call'd them more severe,
 In spite of Nature's soft persuasion steel'd : 160
 While Nature melted, Superstition raved ;
 That mourn'd the dead, and this denied a grave.
 Their sighs incensed ; sighs foreign to the will !
 Their will the tiger sucked, outraged the storm ;
 For, oh ! the cursed ungodliness of Zeal ! 165
 While sinful flesh relented, spirit nursed
 In blind Infallibility's embrace,
 The sainted spirit petrified the breast :
 Denied the charity of dust to spread
 O'er dust ! a charity their dogs enjoy. 170
 What could I do ? what succour ? what resource ?
 With pious sacrilege a grave I stole ;

With impious piety that grave I wrong'd ;
 Short in my duty, coward in my grief !
 More like her murderer than friend, I crept 1
 With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep
 In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.
 I whisper'd what should echo through their realms,
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skin
 Presumptuous fear ! how durst I dread her foes, 1
 While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd ?
 Pardon necessity, bless'd shade ! of grief
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd ;
 Half execration mingled with my prayer ;
 Kindled at man, while I his God adored : 1
 Sore grudged the savage land her sacred dust ;
 Stamp'd the cursed soil ; and with humanity
 (Denied Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.

Glows my resentment into guilt ? what guilt
 Can equal violations of the dead ? 1
 The dead how sacred ! sacred is the dust
 Of this heaven-labour'd form, erect, divine !
 This heaven-assumed, majestic robe of earth
 He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
 With azure bright, and clothed the Sun in gold. 1
 When every passion sleeps that can offend ;
 When strikes us every motive that can melt ;
 When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,
 That strongest curb on insult and ill will ;
 Then ! spleen to dust ? the dust of innocence ? 2
 An angel's dust !—This Lucifer transcends ;
 When he contended for the patriarch's bones.
 'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride ;
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race 2
 Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love ;
 And uncreated, but for love divine ;
And but for love divine this moment lost,
By Fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.

Most horrid ! mid stupendous highly strange !
 Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs ;
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
 And contumelious his humanity :
 What then his vengeance ? Hear it not, ye Stars ! 213
 And thou, pale Moon ! turn paler at the sound,
 Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.
 A previous blast foretels the rising storm ;
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten, ere they fall ;
 Volcanos bellow, ere they disembody ; 220
 Earth trembles, ere her yawning jaws devour ;
 And smoke betrays the wide consuming fire :
 Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
 Is this the flight of Fancy ? would it were ! 225
 Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.
 Fired is the Muse ? and let the Muse be fired :
 Who not inflamed, when what he speaks he feels,
 And in the nerve most tender, in his friends ; 230
 Shame to mankind ! Philander had his foes ;
 He felt the truths I sing, and I in him ;
 But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa !
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart,
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs, 235
 Pangs numerous as the numerous ills that swarm'd
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clustering there,
 Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.
 Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale) 240
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd !
 An aspic each, and all an hydra woe.
 What strong Herculean virtue could suffice ?—
 Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here ?
 This hoary check a train of tears bedews, 245
 And each tear mourns its own distinct distress,
 And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
 Of grief still more as heighten'd by the whole.

A grief like this proprietors excludes :
 Not friends alone such obsequies deplore ; 250
 They make mankind the mourner ; carry sighs
 Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way,
 And turn the gayest thought of gayest age
 Down their right channel, through the vale of death.

The vale of death ! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,
 Where Darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates, 256
 With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
 (Dread day !) that interdicts all future change ;
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin !
 Fit walk, Lorenzo ! for proud human thought ! 260
 There let my thoughts expatiate, and explore
 Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,
 Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.
 For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,
 My soul ! ' The fruits of dying friends survey ; 265
 Expose the vain of life ; weigh life and death :
 Give Death his eulogy ; thy fear subdued ;
 And labour that first palm of noble minds,
 A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.'

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave. 270
 As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood
 Arose, with grief inscribed, a mournful flower,
 Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.
 And first, of dying friends ; what fruit from these ?
 It brings us more than triple aid ; an aid 275
 To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
 To damp our brainless ardours, and abate
 That glare of life which often blinds the wise.
 Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth 280
 Our rugged pass to death ; to break those bars
 Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws
 Cross our obstructed way, and thus to make
Welcome, as safe, our port from every storm.

Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,
And damp'd with omen of our own decease,
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up, 296
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love ;
For us they languish, and for us they die :
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain ? 295
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the resolution in our hearts ?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer ?
Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans, 301
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths ?
Lorenzo ! no ; the thought of death indulge ;
Give it its wholesome empire ! let it reign,
That kind chastiser of thy soul, in joy ! 305
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.
Auspicious era ! golden days, begin !
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.
And why not think on death ? Is life the theme 310
Of every thought ? and wish of every hour ?
And song of every joy ? surprising truth !
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
To wave the numerous ills that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey ; 315
Ere man has measured half his weary stage,
His luxuries have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights :
On cold-served repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless present chews the past ; 320
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
Have disinherited his future hours,
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.

Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
 By passionately loving Life, we make
 Loved Life unlovely, hugging her to death.
 We give to time eternity's regard,
 And dreaming, take our passage for our port.
 Life has no value as an end, but means ;
 An end deplorable ! a means divine !
 When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing : worse than nought
 A nest of pains : when held as nothing, much.
 Like some fair humorists, life is most enjoy'd
 When courted least ; most worth when disesteem
 Then 'tis the seat of comfort rich in peace ;
 In prospect richer far ; important ! awful !
 Not to be mentioned but with shouts of praise !
 Not to be thought on but with tides of joy !
 The mighty basis of eternal bliss !

Where now the barren rock ? the painted shroud
 Where now, Lorenzo, life's eternal round ?
 Have I not made my triple promise good ?
 Vain is the world, but only to the vain.
 To what compare we then this varying scene,
 Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines,
 Waxes and wanes ? (in all propitious Night
 Assists me here) compare it to the moon ;
 Dark in herself, and indigent, but rich
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.
 When gross guilt interposes, labouring Earth,
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy ;
 Her joys at brightest, pallid to that font
 Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo !
 A good man and an angel ! these between
 How thin the barrier ! what divides their fate ?
 Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year ;
 Or if an age, it is a moment still ;
 A moment, or Eternity's forgot.
 Then be what once they were who now are gone

NARCISSA.

49

Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?
 The soft transition call it, and be cheer'd : 440
 Such it is often, and why not to thee?
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
 And may itself procure what it presumes.
 Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduced ;
 Compare the rivals and the kinder crown. 445
 ' Strange competition ! '—True, Lorenzo ! strange !
 So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
 Through chinks, styl'd organs, dim life, peeps at light ;
 Death bursts the involving cloud, and all is day 451
 All eye, all ear, the disembodied power.
 Death has feign'd evils Nature shall not feel ;
 Life, ill substantial wisdom cannot shun.
 Is not the mighty mind, that sun of Heaven ! 455
 By tyrant Life dethroned, imprison'd, pain'd ?
 By Death enlarged, ennobled, deified ?
 Death but entombs the body, Life the soul.

' Is Death then guiltless ? How he marks his way
 With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine ! 460
 Art, Genius, Fortune, elevated power !
 With various lustres these light up the world,
 Which Death puts out, and darkens human race.
 I grant, Lorenzo ! this indictment just :
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror ! 465
 Death humbles these ; more barbarous Life, the man
 Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay ;
 Death of the spirit infinite ! divine !
 Death has no dread but what frail Life imparts,
 Nor Life true joy but what kind Death improves. 470
 No bliss has Life to boast, till Death can give
 Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave ;
 Dark lattice ! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo ! blush at fondness for a life
 Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
 To cater for the sense, and serve at boards

471

Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps
Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.

Luxurious feast ! a soul, a soul immortal,
In all the dainties of a brute bemired !

48

Lorenzo ! blush at terror for a death

Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,

Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,

And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,

And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss. 48

What need I more ?—O Death ! the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death ! thy dreaded harbingers,

Age and disease ; Disease, though long my guest,

That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life :

Which pluck'd a little more, will toll the bell 49

That calls my few friends to my funeral ;

Where feeble nature drops, perhaps, a tear,

While Reason and Religion, better taught,

Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb

With wreath triumphant. Death is victory ! 49

It binds in chains the raging ills of life :

Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,

Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.

That ills corrosive, cares importunate,

Are not immortal too, O Death ! is thine. 50

Our day of dissolution ?—name it right,

'Tis our great pay-day ; 'tis our harvest rich

And ripe. What though the sickle, sometimes keen,

Just scars us as we reap the golden grain ?

More than thy balm, O Gilead ! heals the wound. 50

Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,

Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays

For mighty gain : the gain of each a life !

But, O ! the last the former so transcends, 50

Life dies, compared, Life lives beyond the grave.

And feel I, Death ! no joy from thought of thee ?

Death ! the great counsellor, who man inspires

With every nobler thought and fairer deed !

Death ! the deliverer, who rescues man !

NARCISSA.

51

the rewarder, who the rescued crowns ! 515
 that absolves my birth, a curse without it !
 Death ! that realizes all my cares,
 virtues, hopes ; without it a chimera ;
 of all pain the period, not of joy ;
 source and subject still subsist unhurt ; 520
 my soul, and one in her great sire,
 as the four winds were warring for my dust.
 And from winds and waves, and central night,
 as prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,
 as when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)
 the entire. Death is the crown of life ! 526
 Death denied, poor man would live in vain :
 Death denied, to live would not be life :
 Death denied, e'en fools would wish to die.
 wounds to cure ; we fall, we rise, we reign ! 530
 from our fetters, fasten in the skies,
 blooming Eden withers in our sight.
 gives us more than was in Eden lost :
 King of terrors is the prince of peace.
 Shall I die to vanity, pain, death ? 535
 Shall I die ?—when shall I live for ever ?

NIGHT IV.

The Christian Triumph.

CONTAINING

OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH, AND PRO-
PER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT INESTIMABLE
BLESSING.

TO THE HON. MR. YORKE.

A much indebted Muse, O Yorke ! intrudes.
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.

How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death ! I sing its sovereign cure.

Why start at Death ? where is he ? Death arriv-
Is past ; not come, or gone ; he's never here.
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man,
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worr
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch,
Man makes a death which Nature never made :
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

But were Death frightful, what has age to fear
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.
scarce can meet a monument. but holds

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

98

My younger ; every date cries—' Come away.'

And what recalls me ? look the world around,

And tell me what : the wisest cannot tell.

Should any born of woman give his thought

25

Full range, on just Dislike's unbounded field ;

Of things the vanity, of men the flaws :

Flaws in the best ; the many, flaw all o'er ;

As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark ;

Vivacious ill ; good dying immature ;

30

(How immature, Narcissa's marble tells !)

And at his death bequeathing endless pain ;

His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,

And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant

35

To lucky life) some perquisites of joy ;

A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,

Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,

But, from our comment on the comedy,

Pleasing reflections on parts well sustain'd

40

Or purposed emendations where we fail'd,

Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,

When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,

Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,

And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

45

With me that time is come ; my world is dead ;

A new world rises, and new manners reign :

Foreign comedians, a spruce band ! arrive,

To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.

What a pert race starts up ! the strangers gaze,

50

And I at them ; my neighbour is unknown ;

Nor that the worst. Ah me ! the dire effect

Of loitering here, of death defrauded long.

Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)

My very master knows me not. ———

55

Shall I dare say peculiar is my fate ?

I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot.

An object ever pressing dims the sight,

And hides behind its ardour to be seen.

When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
 They drink it as the nectar of the great,
 And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow
 Refusal! canst thou wear a smother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.
 Who cheapens life abates the fear of death.
 Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
 Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;
 Ambition's ill judged effort to be rich.
 Alas! ambition makes my little less,
 Imbittering the possess'd. Why wish for more?
 Wishing of all employments is the worst;
 Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay!
 Were I as plump as stall'd Theology,
 Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
 Were I as wealthy as a South Sea dream,
 Wishing is an expedient to be poor.
 Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,
 Caught at a court, purged off by purer air
 And simpler diet, gifts of rural life!

Bless'd be that hand divine, which gently laid
 My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
 The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas
 With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:
 Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
 I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
 As that of seas remote, or dying storms!
 And meditate on scenes more silent still;
 Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.
 Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
 Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
 Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;
 I see the circling hunt of noisy men
 Burst law's enclosure, leap the mounds of right,
 Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
 As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,
Till Death, that mighty hunter, catches them all.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 55

ough we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
 ighest station ends in, 'Here he lies;'
 t to dust' concludes her noblest song. 100

ig lives, posterity shall know
 igh in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
 ight e'en gold might come a day too late;
 s subtle deathbed plann'd his scheme
 e vacancies in church or state, 105

ocation deeming it—to die;
 rage canine of dying rich,
 under! and the loudest laugh of Hell.
 coevals! remnants of yourselves.
 an ruins tottering o'er the grave! 110

shall aged men, like aged trees,
 eper their vile root, and closer cling,
 e enamour'd of this wretched soil?
 pale wither'd hands be still stretched out,
 g, at once, with eagerness and age? 115

rice and convulsions, grasping hard?
 at air! for what has earth beside?
 ts but little, nor that little long:
 must he resign his very dust,
 ugal Nature lent him for an hour! 120

experienced rush on numerous ills:
 as man, expert from time, has found
 of life, it opes the gates of death.
 in this vale of years I backward look,
 such numbers, numbers too, of such 125

health, and greener in their age,
 ter on their guard, and fitter far
 ife's subtle game, I scarce believe
 vive. And am I fond of life,
 ce can think it possible I live? 130

miracle! or, what is next,
 Mead! if I am still alive,
 ; have buried what gives life to live,
 of nerve, and energy of thought.
 is not more shallow than impure 135

And vapid : Sense and Reason show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbiter of life and death !

Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun !

Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth 140

From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay

The worm's inferior ; and, in rank, beneath

The dust I tread on ; high to bear my brow,

To drink the spirit of the golden day,

And triumph in existence ; and couldst know 145

No motive but my bliss ; and hast ordain'd

A rise in blessing ! with the patriarch's joy,

Thy call I follow to the land unknown ;

I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust :

Or life or death is equal ; neither weighs ; 150

All weight in this—O let me live to Thee !

Though Nature's terrors thus may be repress'd,

Still frowns grim Death ; guilt points the tyrant's spear.

And whence all human guilt ?—From death forgot.

Ah me ! too long I set at nought the swarm 155

Of friendly warnings which around me flew,

And smiled unsmitten. Small my cause to smile !

Death's admonitions, like shafts upward shot,

More dreadful by delay ; the longer ere

They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound : 160

O think how deep, Lorenzo ! here it stings ;

Who can appease its anguish ? How it burns !

What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can draw ?

What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,

And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb ? 165

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see ;

Ah ! too conspicuous ! it is fix'd on high.

On high ?—what means my frenzy ? I blaspheme :

Alas ! how low ! how far beneath the skies !

The skies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me— 170

But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds ;

Draw the dire steel—ah, no ! the dreadful blessing

What heart or can sustain, or dares forego ?

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

57

ang's all human hope ; that nail supports
 ing universe : that gone, we drop ; 175
 receives us, and the dismal wish
 had been smother'd in her birth—
 s his curtain, and his bed the dust,
 ars and sun are dust beneath his throne ;
 en itself can such indulgence dwell ? 180
 a groan was there ! a groan not his :
 d our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,
 ved the mountain from a guilty world.
 and worlds, so bought, were bought too dear ;
 ns new in angels' bosoms rise, 185
 their song, and make a pause in bliss.
 their song to reach my lofty theme !
 ne, Night ! with all thy tuneful spheres :
 with serapns share seraphic themes,
 w to men the dignity of man ; 190
 aspheme my subject with my song.
 gan pages glow celestial flame,
 istian languish ? On our hearts, not heads,
 foul infamy. My heart ! awake :
 n awake thee, unawaked by this, 195
 ed Deity on human weal ?
 great truths which burst the tenfold night
 en error with a golden flood
 ss day. To feel is to be fired ;
 elieve, Lorenzo ! is to feel. 200
 most indulgent, most tremendous Power !
 e tremendous for thy wonderous love !
 as with awe more awful thy commands,
 transgression dips in sevenfold guilt ;
 hearts tremble at thy love immense ! 205
 mmense, inviolably just !
 ther than thy justice should be strain'd,
 in the Cross ; and, work of wonders far
 test, that thy dearest far might bleed.
 hought ! shall I dare speak it or repress ? 210
 an more execrate or boast the guilt

Which roused such vengeance? which such love is
flamed?

O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstretch'd arm
Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love embrace,
Supporting in full majesty thy throne, 21

When seem'd its majesty to need support;
Or that, or man, inevitably lost:

What but the fathomless of thought divine
Could labour such expedient from despair,
And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt! 22

O how are both exalted by the deed!
The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!

A mystery no less to gods than men!

Not thus our infidels the' Eternal draw, 22

A God all o'er consummate, absolute,
Full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:

They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound;
Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams, 23

Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,

Undeified by their opprobrious praise:

A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless wits! ye baptized infidels!

Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains! 23

The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heaven,

Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,

Amazing and amazed, pour'd forth the price,

All price beyond: though curious to compute,

Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum: 24

Its value vast, ungrasp'd by minds create,

For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.

And was the ransom paid? it was; and paid

(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you!

The Sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene 24

Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;

Not such as this. not such as Nature makes:

A midnight new ! a dread eclipse (without
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown ! 250
 Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain ? or start
 At that enormous load of human guilt
 Which bow'd his blessed head, o'erwhelm'd his cross,
 Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb
 With pangs, strange pangs ! deliver'd of her dead ? 255
 Hell howl'd ; and Heaven that hour let fall a tear :
 Heaven wept, that men might smile ! Heaven bled,
 that man

Might never die !——

And is devotion virtue ? 'tis compell'd.
 What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?
 Such contemplations mount us, and should mount 261
 The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man
 Unraptured, uninflamed.—Where roll'd my thoughts
 To rest from wonders ? other wonders rise,
 And strike where'er they roll : my soul is caught : 265
 Heaven's sovereign blessings, clustering from the cross,
 Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,
 The prisoner of amaze !—In his bless'd life
 I see the path, and in his death the price,
 And in his great ascent the proof supreme, 270
 Of immortality.—And did he rise ?—
 Hear, O ye Nations ! hear it, O ye Dead !
 He rose ! he rose ! he burst the bars of Death.
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates !
 And give the King of glory to come in. 275
 Who is the King of glory ? he who left
 His throne of glory for the pang of death.
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates !
 And give the King of glory to come in.
 Who is the King of glory ? he who slew 280
 The ravenous foe that gorged all human race !
 The King of glory He, whose glory fill'd
 Heaven with amazement at his love to man,
 And with divine complacency beheld
 Powers most illumined, wilder'd in the theme. 282

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?
 Oh, the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd throne!
 Last gasp of vanquish'd Death! Shout, earth and heaven,
 This sum of good to man! whose nature then
 Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb. 290
 Then, then I rose; then first Humanity
 Triumphant pass'd the crystal ports of light,
 (Stupendous guest!) and seized eternal youth,
 Seized in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality 295
 Was then transferr'd to death; and Heaven's duration
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,
 This child of dust.—Man, all immortal! hail;
 Hail, Heaven! All lavish of strange gifts to man!
 Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss! 300

Where am I rapp'd by this triumphant theme,
 On Christian joy's exulting wing, above
 The' Aonian mount!—Alas! small cause for joy!
 What, if to pain immortal? if extent
 Of being, to preclude a close of woe? 305
 Where, then, my boast of immortality?
 I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt:
 For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;
 'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;
 Nor that, unless his death can justify 310
 Relenting guilt in Heaven's indulgent sight.
 If, sick of folly, I relent; he writes
 My name in Heaven with that inverted spear
 (A spear deep dipped in blood) which pierced his side,
 And open'd there a font for all mankind, 315
 Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:
 This, only this, subdues the fear of death!

And what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure,
 And at each step let higher wonder rise!
 ' Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon 320
Through means that speak its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

61

Persisted to provoke ! though wooed, and awed ;
Bless'd, and chastised ; a flagrant rebel still ! 325

A rebel midst the thunders of his throne !

Nor I alone ! a rebel universe !

My species up in arms ! not one exempt !

Yet for the foulest of the foul he dyes,

Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt ! 330

As if our race were held of highest rank ;

And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man !

Bound, every heart ; and, every bosom, burn !

O what a scale of miracles is here !

Its lowest round high planted on the skies, 335

Its towering summit lost beyond the thought

Of man or angel ! O that I could climb

The wonderful ascent, with equal praise !

Praise ! flow for ever, (if astonishment

Will give thee leave) my praise ! for ever flow ; 340

Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heaven

More fragrant than Arabia sacrificed,

And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heaven, shall Praise descend

With her soft plume (from plausible angels' wing 345

First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,

Thus diving in the pockets of the great ?

Is praise the perquisite of every paw,

Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold ?

O, love of gold ! thou meanest of amours ! 350

Shall praise her odours waste on virtues dead,

Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,

Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,

Removing filth, or sinking it from sight ;

A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts, 355

Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect

Their future ornaments ? From courts and thrones

Return, apostate Praise ! thou vagabond !

Thou prostitute ! to thy first love return,

Thy first, thy greatest, once unrival'd theme. 360

There flow redundant, like Meander flow,

Back to the fountain, to that parent Power
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they b
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt; and turn their backs on thee,
Great Sire ! whom thrones celestial ceaseless ai
To prostrate angels an amazing scene !

O the presumption of man's awe for man !—
Man's Author ! End ! Restorer ! Law ! and Ju
Thine all ! Day thine, and thine this gloom of N
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds
What night eternal, but a frown from thee ?
What Heaven's meridian glory, but thy smile ?
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,
While Heaven's high host on hallelujahs live ?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe
My soul in praise to Him who gave my soul ;
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love ! by
Oh most adorable ! most unadored !
Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should
Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause !
How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,
How richly wrought with attributes divine !
What wisdom shines ; what love ! This midnight
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid !
Built with divine ambition ! nought to thee ;
For others this profusion. Thou apart,
Above ! beyond ! Oh ! tell me, mighty Mind !
Where art thou ? Shall I dive into the deep ?
Call to the Sun ? or ask the roaring winds
For their Creator ! shall I question loud
The thunder, if in that the' Almighty dwells ?
Or holds He furious storms in straiten'd reins,
And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car ?

What mean these questions ?—Trembling I re
My prostrate soul adores the present God !

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

63

a distant Deity ? He tunes 400
 e (if tuned ;) the nerve that writes sustains :
 d in his being I resound his praise :
 ough past all diffused, without a shore
 ence, local is his throne (as meet)
 er the dispersed (as standards call 405
 ed from afar ;) to fix a point,
 al point, collective of his sons ;
 nite every nature but his own.
 ameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth,
 ture's shield the shadow of his hand ; 410
 olution his suspended smile !
 at First-Last ! pavilion'd high he sits
 ess, from excessive splendour born,
 unseen, unless through lustre lost.
 y, to created glory, bright, 415
 to central horrors : he looks down
 hat soars, and spans immensity.
 gh night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
 ss Creation ! what art thou ? a beam,
 effluvium of his majesty. 420
 ll an atom of this atom world
 in dust and sin, the theme of Heaven ?
 o the centre should I send my thought,
 a beds of glittering ore and glowing gems ;
 ggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay ; 425
 t in darkness : if, on towering wing,
 through the boundless vault of stars !
 s, though rich, what dross their gold to thee,
 ood ! wise ! wonderful ! eternal King !
 se conscious stars thy throne around, 430
 ver pouring, and imbibing bliss,
 their strain : they want it, more they want .
 ir abundance, humble their sublime,
 their energy, their ardour cold ;
 still, their highest rapture burns, 435
 its mark, defective though divine !
 re—this thome is man's, and man's alone ;

Their vast appointments reach it not ; they see
On earth a bounty not indulged on high,
And downward look for Heaven's superior praise ! 440
Firstborn of Ether ! high in fields of Light !

View man, to see the glory of your God !

Could angels envy, they had envied here :

And some did envy ; and the rest, though gods,

Yet still gods unredeem'd (there triumphs man, 445

Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies,)

They less would feel, though more adorn my theme.

They sung Creation (for in that they shared ;)

How rose in melody that child of love !

Creation's great superior, man ! is thine ; 450

Thine is Redemption ! they just gave the key ;

'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,

Though human, yet divine ; for should not this

Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here ?

Redemption ! 'twas Creation more sublime ; 455

Redemption ! 'twas the labour of the skies ;

Far more than labour—it was death in Heaven !

A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,

If not far bolder still to disbelieve. 459

Here pause and ponder. Was there death in Heaven ?

What then on earth ? on earth, which struck the blow ?

Who struck it ? Who—O how is man enlarged,

Seen through this medium ! How the pigmy towers !

How counterpoised his origin from dust !

How counterpoised, to dust his sad return ! 465

How voided his vast distance from the skies !

How near he presses on the seraph's wing !

Which is the seraph ? which the born of clay ?

How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud

Of guilt and clay condensed, the Son of Heaven ! 470

The double Son ; the made, and the remade !

And shall Heaven's dooble property be lost ?—

Man's double madness only can destroy.

To man the bleeding Cross has premised all ;

The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace. 475

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

65

ve his life, what grace shall He deny ?
 who from this rock of ages leap
 es, plunging headlong in the deep !
 ordial joy, what consolation strong,
 er winds arise, or billows roll, 480
 rest in the Master of the storm !
 ere, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile ;
 ile apostates tremble in a calm.
 know thyself : all wisdom centres there.
 man seems ignoble, but to man. 485
 hat grandeur, men o'erlook, admire :
 g shall human nature be their book,
 ate mortal ! and unread by thee ?
 m dim Reason sheds shows wonders there ;
 gh contents ! illustrious faculties ! 490
 grand comment, which displays at full
 an height, scarce sever'd from divine,
 en composed, was publish'd on the Cross.
 ooks on that, and sees not in himself
 l stranger, a terrestrial god ? 495
 us partner with the Deity
 igh attribute, immortal life ?
 bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.
 nd, as I gaze, my mounting soul
 strange fire, Eternity ! at thee, 500
 s the world—or, rather, more enjoys.
 nged the face of Nature ! how improved !
 em'd a chaos, shines a glorious world ;
 a world, an Eden ; heighten'd all !
 ther scene ! another self ! 505
 another, as time rolls along,
 a self far more illustrious still.
 long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
 ed by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,
 olutions of surprising Fate ! 510
 ture opens, and receives my soul,
 ess walks of raptur'd thought ! where gods
 and embrace me ! What new birth

Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,
Where what now charms, perhaps, whate'er exists
Old Time and fair Creation, are forgot. 516

Is this extravagant? of man we form
Extravagant conception, to be just :
Conception unconfined wants wings to reach him ;
Beyond its reach the Godhead only more. 520

He, the great Father ! kindled at one flame
The world of rationals : one spirit pour'd
From spirits' awful Fountain ; pour'd Himself
Through all their souls, but not in equal stream,
Profuse, or frugal, of the' inspiring God, 525
As his wise plan demanded ; and when pass'd
Their various trials, in their various spheres,
If they continue rational, as made,
Resorbs them all into Himself again,
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown. 530

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,
Though yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold ?
Angels are men of a superior kind ;
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ; 535
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise :
While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd, 540
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,
Yet absent ; but not absent from their love.

Michael has fought our battles ; Raphael sung 545
Our triumphs ; Gabriel on our errands flown,
Sent by the Sovereign : and are these, O man !
Thy friends, thy warm allies ? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder !) rival to the brute ?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies 550
To wretched man, the goddess in her left

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

67

Holds out this world, and in her right the next

Religion! the sole voucher man is man;

Supporter sole of man above himself;

E'en in this night of frailty, change, and death, 555

She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.

Religion! Providence! an after-state!

Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;

This can support us; all is sea besides;

Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours. 560

His hand the good man fastens on the skies,

And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,

Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,

And dungeon horrors, by kind Fate discharged, 565

Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure

Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise;

His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,

As if newborn he triumphs in the change:

So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims 570

And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth

Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts

To Reason's region, her own element,

Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness, 575

And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine

The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;

There sacred violence assaults the soul;

There nothing but compulsion is forbore.

Can love allure us! or can terror awe? 580

He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the Sun:

He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.

If in his love so terrible, what then

His wrath inflamed? his tenderness on fire?

Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires? 585

Can prayer, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!

My theme! my inspiration! and my crown?

My strength in age! my rise in low estate!

My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!

My light in darkness ! and my life in death ! 590

My boast through time ! bliss through eternity !

Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,

Or fathom thy profound of love to man !

To man of men the meanest, e'en to me ;

My sacrifice ! my God !—what things are these ! 595

What then art Thou ? by what name shall I call thee ?

Knew I the name devout archangels use,

Devout archangels should the name enjoy,

By me unrival'd ; thousands more sublime,

None half so dear as that which, though unspoke, 600

Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence

Is lost in love ! thou great Philanthropist !

Father of angels ! but the friend of man !

Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born !

Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand

From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood ! 605

How art thou pleased by bounty to distress !

To make us groan beneath our gratitude,

Too big for birth ! to favour and confound ;

To challenge and to distance all return ! 610

Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,

And leave Praise panting in the distant vale !

Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due ;

And sacrilegious our sublimest song !

But since the naked will obtains thy smile, 615

Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,

And future life symphonious to my strain,

(That noblest hymn to Heaven !) for ever lie

Entomb'd my fear of death ! and every fear,

The dread of every evil, but thy frown. 620

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile ?

Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.

Ye Quietists ! in homage to the skies !

Serene ! of soft address ! who mildly make

An unobtrusive tender of your hearts, 625

Abhorring violence ! who halt indeed,

But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heaven !

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

60

Is my song too turbulent? too warm?

Or, then, the pagans of the soul?

Am I baptized? alone ordain'd

630

Things sacred? Oh, for warmer still!

Is my zeal, and age benumbs my powers?

Is my humbler heart and prouder song!

How much injured Theme! with that soft eye

Glanced o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look

635

On to the coldness of my breast,

On to the winter in my strain.

Cold-hearted, frozen Formalists!

Is theme 'tis impious to be calm:

Is reason, transport temper here.

640

Even, which gave us ardour, and has shown

For man so strongly, not disdain

Both emollients in theology,

Not Virtue's downy doctors, preach;

Is of piety, a lukewarm praise?

645

Is sweet from incense uninflamed?

When lukewarm is undevout;

But it glows, its heat is struck to Heaven,

And hearts her golden harps are strung;

Even's orchestra chants Amen to man.

650

Or dream I hear, their distant strain,

The soul, and tasting strong of Heaven,

Ed on celestial Pity's plume,

The vast spaces of the universe.

Am I in this melancholy gloom?

655

Will Death (now stingless) like a friend

Be of their choir? Oh, when will Death

Altering, old, partition wall throw down?

Angels, one in nature, one abode?

Oh divine! that givest us to the skies:

660

Sure! glorious patron of the past

Present! when shall I thy shrine adore?

Earth's continent, immensely wide,

Oh bless'd, this little isle of life,

Incarcerating colony

665

Divides us. Happy day ! that breaks our chain ;
 That manumits ; that calls from exile home ;
 That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
 And readmits us, through the guardian hand
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne ; 670
 Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.
 'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command ;
 'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.
 'Tis impious in a good man to be sad. 675

Seest thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope ?
 Touch'd by the Cross, we live ; or, more than die ;
 That touch which touch'd not angels ; more divine
 Than that which touch'd confusion into form,
 And darkness into glory : partial touch ! 680
 Ineffably preeminent regard !

Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
 From Heaven through all duration, and supports,
 In one illustrious and amazing plan, 685
 Thy welfare, Nature ! and thy God's renown.
 That touch, with charms celestial, heals the soul
 Diseased, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
 Turns earth to Heaven, to heavenly thrones transforms
 The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb. 690

Dost ask me when ? When He who died returns ;
 Returns, how changed ; where then the man of woe ?
 In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,
 And all his courts, exhausted by the tide
 Of deities triumphant in his train, 695
 Leave a stupendous solitude in Heaven ;
 Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
 Of pomp and multitude ; a radiant band
 Of angels new, of angels from the tomb !

Is this by Fancy thrown remote ? and rise 700
 Dark doubts between the promise and event ?
*I send thee not to volumes for thy cure ;
 Lead Nature : Nature is a friend to truth ;*

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

71

Nature is Christian ; preaches to mankind,
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed. 705

Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight ?
The' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds
On gazing nations from his fiery train
Of length enormous ; takes his ample round
Through depths of ether ; coasts unnumber'd worlds
Of more than solar glory ; doubles wide 711

Heaven's mighty cape ; and then revisits earth,
From the long travel of a thousand years.
Thus at the destined period shall return.

He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze, 715
And with Him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point,
Our Hope precarious in low whisper breathes ;
Faith speaks aloud, distinct ; e'en adders hear,
But turn, and dart into the dark again. 720

Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,
And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,
That mountain barrier between man and peace. 725
'Tis Faith disarms Destruction, and absolves
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve ? Lorenzo !—' Reason bids ;
All-sacred Reason.'—Hold her sacred still ;
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame : 730

All-sacred Reason ! source, and soul, of all
Demanding praise, on earth, or earth above !
My heart is thine : deep in its inmost folds
Live thou with life ; live dearer of the two.

Wear I the blessed Cross, by Fortune stamp'd 735
On passive Nature before Thought was born ?
My birth's blind bigot ! fired with local zeal !—
No : Reason rebaptized me when adult :
Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale ;
My heart became the convert of my head, 74

And made that choice which once was but my fate

'On argument alone my faith is built,'

Reason pursued is Faith; and unpursued,

Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more :

And such our proof, that or our Faith is right, 745

Or Reason lies, and Heaven designed it wrong.

Absolve we this ! what then is blasphemy ?—

Fond as we are, and justly fond of Faith,

Reason, we grant, demands our first regard ;

The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear. 750

Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower :

The fading flower shall die, but Reason lives

Immortal, as her Father in the skies !

When Faith is virtue, Reason makes it so.

Wrong not the Christian ; think not Reason yours ;

'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear ; 755

'Tis Reason's injured rights his wrath resents ;

'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown :

To give lost Reason life he pour'd his own.

Believe, and show the reason of a man ; 760

Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god ;

Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.

Through Reason's wounds alone thy Faith can die,

Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,

And dips in venom his twice mortal sting. 765

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due

To those who push our antidote aside ;

Those boasted friends to Reason and to man,

Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves

Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart. 770

These pompous sons of Reason idolized,

And vilified at once ; of Reason dead,

Then deified, as monarchs were of old ;

What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow ?

While love of truth through all their camp resound

They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noontide ray, 775

Spike up their inch of reason on the point

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

73

Whic wit, call'd Argument,
 xulting in their taper, cry,
 e Sun !' and, Indianlike, adore. 780
 y of morals ? O thou bleeding Love !
 er of new morals to mankind !
 morality is love of Thee.
 Socrates, if such they were
 ey bate of that sublime renown,) 785
 Socrates might justly stand
 ion of a modern fool.
 ian is the highest style of man !
 e who the blessed Cross wipes off,
 lot, from his dishonour'd brow ? 790
 emble, 'tis at such a sight :
 they quit, desponding of their charge,
 k with grief or wonder who can tell ?
 o sense ! ye citizens of earth '
 done the Christian banner fly) 795
 ow wise your choice, how great your gain ?
 picture of Earth's happiest man :
 is wish, it comes : he sends it back,
 e call'd another : that arrives,
 same welcome ; yet he still calls on ; 800
 lls him, who varies not his call,
 im fast, in chains of darkness bound,
 dies, and Judgment sets him free ;
 far less welcome than his chain.'
 t man happy ; grant him happy long ; 805
 s highest prize her latest hour ;
 so late, is nimble in approach,
 t post, comes on in full career.
 the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud !
 he fable of thy former years ? 810
 wn the gulf of time ; as far from thee
 d near been thine ; the day in hand,
 struggling to get loose, is going ;
 'possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone ;
 rift moment fled, is death advanced 815

while useful its advice, its acc
By the great edict, the divine
Truth is deposited with man's
An honest hour, and faithful to
Truth ! eldest daughter of the
Truth ! of his council when he
Nor less, when he shall judge t
Though silent long, and sleepin
Smother'd with errors, and opp
That heaven-commission'd hour
But from her cavern in the soul
Like him they fable under Ætn
The goddess bursts in thunder
Loudly convinces, and severely
Dark demons I discharge, and h
The keen vibration of bright Ti
Just definition ! though by scho
Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this pa
And trust, for once, a prophet a
' Men may live fools, but fools t

NIGHT V.

The Relapse.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

so ! to recriminate is just.

less for fame is avarice of air.

the man is vain who writes for praise :

no man e'er deserved, who sought no more.

ist thy second charge. I grant the Muse 5

en blush'd at her degenerate sons,

d by Sense to plead her filthy cause,

e the low, to magnify the mean,

btalize the gross into refined ;

magic numbers' powerful charm 10

given to make a civet of their song

e, and sweeten ordure to perfume.

true pagan, deifies the brute,

is our swine enjoyments from the mire.

fact notorious, nor obscure the cause. 15

ar the chains of pleasure and of pride :

share the man, and these distract him too ;

ifferent ways, and clash in their commands.

ike an eagle, builds among the stars ;

asure, larklike, nests upon the ground. 20

ared by brute creation, Pride resents ;

e embraces ; man would both enjoy,

th at once : a point how hard to gain !

at can't Wit, when stung by strong desire ?

dares attempt this arduous enterprise. 25

oys of *Sense* can't rise to *Reason's* taste,

In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoop
 To sordid scenes, and meets them with ap;
 Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loe
 Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl :
 A thousand phantoms and a thousand spell
 A thousand opiates scatters to delude,
 To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,
 And the fool'd mind delightfully confound.
 Thus that which shock'd the judgment shoe
 That which gave pride offence, no more of
 Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,
 At war eternal, which in man shall reign,
 By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace,
 And hand in hand lead on the rank debauc
 From rank, refined to delicate and gay.
 Art, cursed Art ! wipes off the' indebted bl
 From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every al
 Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,
 And Infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,
 These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend
 The flowers of eloquence, profusely pour'd
 O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd worl
 Can powers of genius exercise their page,
 And consecrate enormities with song !

But let not these inexpiable strains
 Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity
 Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the w
 As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point,
 A point in her esteem ; from whence to st
 And run the round of universal space,
 To visit being universal there,
 And being's Source, that utmost flight of
 Yet spite of this so vast circumference,
 Well knows but what is moral nought is ~
Sing sirens only ? do not angels ~
There is in Poesy a decent

THE RELAPSE.

77

all becomes her when she speaks to Prose,
ger sister, haply not more wise. 66

t thou, Lorenzo, to find pastimes here?

passion blown into a flame,

flatter'd, dignity disgraced,

ield of fiction, all on flower, 70

w colours, here, or silken tale;

n counsels, images of awe,

hich Eternity lets fall on man,

le weight through these revolving spheres.

i-deep silence, and incumbent shade : 75

such as shall revisit your last hour,

ll'd, and live when life expires;

ark pencil, Midnight ! darker still

holy dipp'd, imbrowns the whole.

, e'en this, my laughter-loving friends ! 80

and thy brothers of the smile !

ports you most can most engage,

your ear, and chain you to my song.

fail me, know the wise shall taste

I sing ; the truths I sing shall feel ; 85

g, give assent ; and their assent

ecompense ; is more than praise.

thine, O Litchfield !—nor mistake ;

unintroduced I force my way

ot unknown, not unallied 90

or by blood, illustrious youth !

om blooming amaranthine bowers,

the language harmony, descends

nd asks admittance for the Muse ;

at will not pain thee with thy praise : 95

she drops, by nobler still inspired.

less'd Spirit ! whether the Supreme,

mundane Father ! in whose breast

reation, unborn being dwelt,

various revolutions roll'd 100

ough future, prior to themselves ;

th can blow it into nought again,

Or from his throne some delegated power,
 Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the tho
 From vain and vile to solid and sublime !
 Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
 And fuller of the God, than that which burst
 From famed Castalia ; nor is yet allay'd
 My sacred thirst, though long my soul has ran
 Through pleasing paths of moral and divine,
 By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

By them best lighted are the paths of thoug
 Nights are their days, their most illumined ho
 By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,
 Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
 Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
 By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts
 Imposed, precarious, broken, ere mature.
 By night, from objects free, from passion coo
 Thoughts uncontroll'd and unimpress'd, the l
 Of pure election, arbitrary range,
 Not to the limits of one world confin'd ;
 But from ethereal travels light on earth,
 As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
 Of feather'd fopperies, the Sun adore :
 Darkness has more divinity for me ;
 It strikes thought inward ; it drives back the
 To settle on herself, our point supreme !
 There lies our theatre ; there sits our judge.
 Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull sc
 'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd o
 'Twixt man and vanity ; 'tis Reason's reign,
 And Virtue's too ; these tutelary shades
 Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.
 Night is the good man's friend, and guardian
It no less rescues virtue than inspires.

*Virtue, for ever frail as fair below,
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,*

THE RELAPSE.

79

Nor touches on the world without a stain.
 The world's infectious ; few bring back at eve,
 Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
 Something we thought, is blotted ; we resolved,
 Is shaken ; we renounced, returns again. 145
 Each salutation may slide in a sin
 Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
 Nor is it strange ; light, motion, concourse, noise,
 All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
 Neglectful of our home affairs, flies off 150
 In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
 And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,
 And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
 Ambition fires ambition ; love of gain 155
 Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast :
 Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe ;
 And inhumanity is caught from man,
 From smiling man ! A slight, a single glance,
 And shot at random, often has brought home 160

• A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
 Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.
 We see, we hear, with peril ; Safety dwells
 Remote from multitude. The world's a school
 Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around ! 165
 We must or imitate or disapprove ;
 Must list as their accomplices or foes :
 That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
 From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit
 With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade. 170

This sacred shade and solitude what is it ?
 'Tis the felt presence of the Deity !
 Few are the faults we flatter when alone ;
 Vice sinks in her allurements, is unguilt,
 And looks, like other objects, black by night. 175
 By night an atheist half believes a God !

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conscious Moon, through every distant age.

THE COMPLAINT.

N. V

as held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,
in Contemplation's eye, her purging ray. 180
he famed Athenian, he who woo'd from Heaven
philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
and form their manners, not inflame their pride.
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
his labouring mind, the stars in silence slide, 185
and seem all gazing on their future guest,
see him soliciting his ardent suit
in private audience : all the livelong night,
fixed in thought, and motionless, he stands ;
nor quits his theme or posture till the Sun 190
in rude drunkard ! rising rosy from the main)
disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
and gives him to the tumult of the world.
Hail, precious moments ! stolen from the black waste
of murder'd time ! auspicious Midnight, hail ! 195
the world excluded, every passion hush'd,
and open'd a calm intercourse with Heaven,
where the soul sits in council, ponders past,
predestines future action ; sees, not feels
tumultuous Life, and reasons with the storm, 200
but her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.
What awful joy ! what mental liberty !
I'm not pent in darkness ; rather say
(not too bold) in darkness I'm imbower'd.
lightful gloom ! the clustering thoughts around 205
spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade ;
but droop by day, and sicken in the Sun ;
ought borrows light elsewhere ; from that first fire,
the fountain of animation ! whence descends
Seraphina, my celestial guest ! who deigns 210
lightly to visit me, so mean, and now,
unconscious how needful discipline to man,
from pleasing dalliance with the charms of Night,
a wandering thought recalls, to what excites
another beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb ! 215
is it feeble Nature calls me back,

THE RELAPSE. -

51

And breaks my spirit into grief again ?
 Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood ?
 A cold slow puddle, creeping through my veins ?
 Or is it thus with all men ?—Thus with all. 220
 What are we ? how unequal ! now we soar,
 And now we sink. To be the same transcends
 Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul
 For lodging ill ; too dearly rents her clay.
 Reason, a baffled counsellor ! but adds 225
 The blush of weakness to the bane of woe.
 The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate
 In this damp dusky region, charged with storms,
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly ;
 Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall : 230
 Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again ;
 And not to yield, though beaten, all our praise.
 'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.
 Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,
 Experience damps our triumph. I, who late, 235
 Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
 Where grief detain'd me prisoner, mounting high,
 Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,
 And call'd mankind to glory, shook of pain,
 Mortality shook off, in ether pure, 240
 And struck the stars ; now feel my spirits fail ;
 They drop me from the zenith ; down I rush,
 Like him whom fable fledged with waxen wings,
 In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.
 How wretched is the man who never mourn'd ! 245
 I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's stream :
 Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves,
 Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,
 (Inestimable gain !) and gives Heaven leave
 To make him but more wretched, not more wise. 250
 If wisdom is our lesson (and what else
 Ennobles man ? what else have angels learn'd ?)
 Grief ! more proficients in thy school are made,

Than Genius or proud Learning e'er could boast.
 Voracious Learning, often overfed, 255
 Digests not into sense her motley meal.
 This bookcase, with dark booty almost burst,
 This forager on others' wisdom, leaves
 Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd ;
 With mix'd manure she surfeits the rank soil, 260
 Dung'd, but not dress'd, and rich to beggary :
 A pomp untamable of weeds prevails ;
 Her servant's wealth encumber'd Wisdom mourns.

And what says Genius ? ' Let the dull be wise !'

Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong, 265
 And loves to boast, where blush men less inspired.
 It pleads exemption from the laws of Sense,
 Considers Reason as a leveller,
 And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.
 That wise it could be, thinks an ample claim ; 270
 To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.
 Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.
 Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

But Wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep.
 When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
 And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower ; 275
 Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows ;
 Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
 If so, Narcissa ! welcome my relapse ;
 I'll raise a tax on my calamity, 280
 And reap rich compensation from my pain.
 I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,
 And gather every thought of sovereign power
 To chase the moral maladies of man ;
 Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,
 Though natives of this coarse penurious soil ; 285
 Nor wholly wither there, where seraphs sing,
 Refined, exalted, not annull'd, in Heaven
 Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
In either clime, though more illustrious there. 290

THE RELAPSE.

83

choicely cull'd, and elegantly ranged,
 form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,
 adventure, of no fading flowers.
 on what themes shall puzzled choice descend ?
 importance of contemplating the tomb ; 295
 on decline it ; suicide's foul birth :
 ous kinds of grief ; the faults of age ;
 ath's dread character—invite my song.
 first, the' importance of our end survey'd.
 counsel quick dismissal of our grief. 300
 n kindness ! our hearts heal too soon.
 y more kind than He who struck the blow ?
 l it do his errand in our hearts,
 ish peace till nobler guests arrive,
 ig it back a true and endless peace ? 305
 es are friends : as glaring day
 unnumber'd lustres robs our sight,
 ty puts out unnumber'd thoughts
 rt high, and light divine, to man.
 an how bless'd, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
 apt to thrust between us and ourselves ! 311
 choice to take his favourite walk
 Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
 ed by Vanity's fantastic ray ;
 his monuments, to weigh his dust, 315
 vaults, and dwell among the tombs !
 ! read with me Narcissa's stone ;
 a was thy favourite) let us read
 al stone ; few doctors preach so well ;
 tors so tenderly can touch 320
 ing heart. What pathos in the date !
 ds can strike ; and yet in them we see
 ages of what we here enjoy.
 use have we to build on length of life ?
 ions seize when fear is laid asleep, 325
 oreboded is our strongest guard.
 om her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
 diant goddess ! sallies on my soul,

And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight,
 Disperses the mist our sultry passions raise
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,
 And shows the real estimate of things,
 Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw :
 Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms
 Detects Temptation in a thousand lies.
 Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves
 And all they bleed for as the summer's dust
 Driven by the whirlwind : lighted by her beam
 I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
 See things invisible, feel things remote,
 Am present with futurities ; think nought
 To man so foreign as the joys possess'd,
 Nought so much his as those beyond the grave
 No folly keeps its colour in her sight ;

Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms.
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound
 If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,
 Like sibyl, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss !
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.

Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo
 How differ worldly Wisdom and divine ?
 Just as the waning and the waxing moon.
 More empty worldly Wisdom every day,
 And every day more fair her rival shines.
 When later, there's less time to play the fool.
 Soon our whole term for Wisdom is expired
 (Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave
 And everlasting fool is writ in fire,
 Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resembles sibyls' leaves,
 The good man's days to sibyls' books compare
 (In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale,)
 In price still rising as in number less,
Inestimable quite his final hour.

*For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones ;
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.*

THE RELAPSE.

85

'Oh let me die his death!' all Nature cries.
'Then live his life.'—All Nature falters there;
Our great physician daily to consult,
To commune with the grave, our only cure. 370

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's; And yet
From a friend's grave how soon we disengage!
E'en to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
Why are friends ravish'd from us? 'tis to bind,
By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts 375
The thought of Death, which Reason, too supine,
Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.
Nor Reason nor Affection, no, nor both
Combined, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
Behold the' inexorable hour at hand; 380
Behold the' inexorable hour forgot!
And to forget it the chief aim of life,
Though well to ponder it is life's chief end.

Is Death, that ever threatening, ne'er remote,
That all important, and that only sure, 385
(Come when he will) an unexpected guest?
Nay, though invited by the loudest calls
Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still?
Though numerous messengers are sent before,
To warn his great arrival? What the cause, 390
The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?
All Heaven looks down, astonish'd at the sight!

Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,
We can't thrust in a single care between?
Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares, 395
The thought of Death can't enter for the throng?
Is it that Time steals on with downy feet,
Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?
To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;
We take the lying sister for the same. 400
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,
For ever changing, unperceived the change.
In the same brook none ever bathed him twice;
To the same life none ever twice awoke.

THE COMPLAINT.

N V.

all the brook the same : the same we think 405
 life, though still more rapid in its flow,
 mark the much irrevocably lapsed,
 mingled with the sea. Or shall we say
 aining still the brook to bear us on)
 life is like a vessel on the stream ? 410
 e embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
 me descend, but not on time intent ;
 sed, unconscious of the gliding wave,
 on a sudden we perceive a shock ;
 start, awake, look out : what see we there ! 415
 brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.
 this the cause Death flies all human thought ?
 it Judgment, by the Will struck blind,
 domineering mistress of the soul !
 him so strong, by Dalilah the fair ?— 420
 it fear turns startled Reason back,
 a looking down a precipice so steep ?—
 dreadful ; and the dread is wisely placed
 nature, conscious of the make of man,
 eadful friend it is, a terror kind, 425
 ming sword to guard the tree of Life.
 at unawed, in Life's most smiling hour
 good man would repine ; would suffer joys,
 burn impatient for his promised skies.
 bad, on each punctilious pique of pride, 430
 loom of humour, would give Rage the rein,
 d o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
 mar the scenes of Providence below.
 hat groan was that, Lorenzo ?—Furies ! rise,
 drown in your less execrable yell, 435
 nnia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
 ing impetuous, a black sullen soul,
 ed from hell with horrid lust of death.
 friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
 ll'd, so thought—and then he fled the field ; 440
 ase the fear of death than fear of life.
 in ! infamous for suicide !

An island, in thy manners: far disjoin'd
 From the whole world of rationals beside!
 In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head, 445
 Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd, while, I detect the cause
 Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth,
 And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.
 Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant Sun; 450
 The Sun is innocent, thy clime absolved.
 Immoral climes kind Nature never made.
 The cause I sing, in Eden might prevail,
 And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow 455
 Who names his soul,) a native of the skies!
 Highborn and free, her freedom should maintain.
 Unsold, unmortgaged for earth's little bribes.
 The' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,
 Like strangers, jealous of her dignity, 460
 Studios of home, and ardent to return,
 Of earth suspicious, Earth's enchanted cup
 With cool reserve light touching, should indulge
 On immortality her godlike taste; [there.

There take large draughts; make her chief banquet
 But some reject this sustenance divine, 466
 To beggarly vile appetites descend,
 Ask alms of Earth, for guests that came from Heaven!
 Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,
 Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate) 470
 Their native freedom, to the prince who sways
 This nother world: and when his payments fail,
 When his foul basket gorges them no more,
 Or their pall'd palates loathe the basket full,
 Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage, 475
 For breaking all the chains of Providence,
 And bursting their confinement, though fast barr'd
 By laws divine and human, guarded strong
 With horrors doubled to defend the pass,
 The blackest Nature or dire guilt can raise,

And moated round with fathomless destruction,
Sure to receive and whelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons ! is the cause, to you unknown,
Or worse, o'erlook'd ; o'erlook'd by magistrates,
Thus criminals themselves ! I grant the deed
Is madness ; but the madness of the heart.

And what is that ? our utmost bound of guilt.

A sensual, unreflecting life is big

With monstrous births, and Suicide, to crown
The black infernal brood. The bold to break
Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush
Through sacred Nature's murder, on their own,
Because they never think of death, they die.

'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,
At once to shun, and meditate his end.

When by the bed of languishment we sit,
(The seat of Wisdom ! if our choice, not fate)

Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head ;

Number their moments, and in every clock
Start at the voice of an eternity ;

See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift

An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,

Then sink again, and quiver into death,

That most pathetic herald of our own :

How read we such sad scenes ? As sent to man

In perfect vengeance ? no ; in pity sent,

To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,

Indelible, Death's image on his heart,

Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.

We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile.

The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry.

Our quick-returning folly cancels all,

As the tide rushing razes what is writ

In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo ! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh ?

Or studied the philosophy of tears ?

(A science yet unlectured in our schools !)

THE RELAPSE.

89

descended deep into the breast,
 heir source? if not, descend with me, 520
 these briny rivulets to their springs.
 eral tears from different causes rise :
 separate cisterns in the soul,
 kinds they flow. From tender hearts,
 atagion call'd, some burst at once, 525
 i obsequious to the leading eye ;
 more time, by curious art distill'd.
 ts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,
 the magic of the public eye,
 s' smitten rock, gush out amain : 530
 o to share the fame of the deceased,
 merit, and to them so dear :
 l on praises which they think they share ;
 without a blush, commend themselves.
 rn, in proof that something they could love ;
 o not to relieve their grief, but show. 536
 o in perfect justice to the dead,
 us all their love is in arrear.
 hievously weep, not unapprized,
 etimes aid the conquest of an eye. 540
 address the soft Ephesians draw
 e network o'er entangled hearts !
 rough crystal, how their roses glow,
 id pearl runs trickling down their cheek !
 t prouder Egypt's wanton queen, 545
 gems, herself dissolved in love.
 p at death, abstracted from the dead,
 ate, like Charles, their own decease.
 nstruction some are deemed to weep,
 decent veil conceals their joy. 550
 p in earnest, and yet weep in vain,
 i indiscretion as in woe.
 lind Passion ! impotently pours
 : deserve more tears ; while Reason sleeps,
 like an idiot, unconcern'd, 555
 ehends the meaning of the storm ;

~~They~~ make a pastime of the stingless
Far as the deep-resounding knell they
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it;
No grain of wisdom pays them for the

Half round the globe the tears pump
Are spent in watering vanities of life;
In making folly flourish still more fair.
When the sick soul, her wonted stay wi
Reclines on earth and sorrows in the du
Instead of learning there her true suppo
(Though there thrown down her true sup
Without Heaven's aid, impatient to be b
She crawls to the next shrub or bramble
Though from the stately cedar's arms sh
With stale forsworn embraces clings an
The stranger weds, and blossoms, as bef
In all the fruitless fopperies of life,
Presents her weed, well fancied at the b
And raffles for the death's head on the r

So wept Aurelia, till the destined you
Stepp'd in with his receipt for making s
And blanching sables into bridal bloom.
So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,

THE RELAPSE.

91

I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death. 595

A soul without reflection, like a pile

Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth : what says it to gray hairs ?

Narcissa ! I'm become thy pupil now.—

Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew, 600

She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven !

Time on this head has snow'd, yet still 'tis borne

Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.

Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe

Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair ; 605

With graceless gravity chastising youth,

That youth chastised surpassing in a fault,

Father of all, forgetfulness of death !

As if, like objects pressing on the sight,

Death had advanced too near us to be seen ; 610

Or that life's loan Time ripen'd into right,

And men might plead prescription from the grave ;

Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.

Deathless ? far from it ! such are dead already ;

Their hearts are buried, and the world their grave. 615

Tell me, some god ! my guardian angel ! tell

What thus infatuates ? what enchantment plants

The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,

Already at the door ? He knocks ; we hear him,

And yet we will not hear. What mail defends 620

Our untouch'd hearts ? what miracle turns off

The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers

Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd ?

We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs

Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves, 625

Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still !

We see Time's furrows on another's brow,

And Death intrench'd, preparing his assault :

How few themselves in that just mirror see !

Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong ! 630

*There death is certain ; doubtful here : he must,
And soon : we may, within an age, expire.*

... appetite must clud
Shall Folly labour hard to me
Baubles, I mean, that strike u
While Nature is relaxing ever
Ask Thought for joy ; grow ri
Think you the soul, when this
Has nothing of more manly to
Contract the taste immortal ; le
To relish what alone subsists he
Divine, or none, henceforth you
Of age, the glory is to wish to d
That wish is praise and promise
Past life, and promises our future
What weakness see not children
Grand climacterical absurdities !
Gray hair'd authority, to faults o
How shocking ! it makes folly thr
And our first childhood might our
Peace and esteem is all that age ca
Nothing but wisdom gives the first
Nothing but the repute of being wi
Folly bars both : our age is quite u
What folly can be ranker ? like o
Our wishes lengthen

THE RELAPSE.

93

rks on board, and wait the wind
 vs us into worlds unknown :
 oo, a dreadful scene !
 rophets to themselves ; foresee
 ; their future fate foretaste : 675
 aste the bitterness of death.
 eath alone the fear destroys :
 that precious thought
 ight darkness on the soul,
 eath it on a precipice, 680
 first blast, and lost for ever.
 nzo, why so warmly press'd,
 nmer'd on thine ear,
 eath ? That thought is the machine,
 ne ! that heaves us from the dust, 685
 men. That thought, ply'd home,
 the ghastly precipice
 , will soften the descent,
 our passage to the grave.
 e wish'd ! what heart of flesh 690
 tremendous ? dare extremes ?
 te of infinite ? what hand,
 est brand of censure bold
 uage too well known to thee,) 695
 ent give its all to Chance,
 e for an Eternity !
 isa ! aid me to keep pace
 nd, ere her scissars cut
 , to break this tougher thread
 hat ties me to the world. 700
 umbering Reason, to send forth
 ervation on the foe ;
 vey the rapid march
 nd messengers to man,
 ehind him turns them all. 705
 t, by Nature sign'd,
 ne out, though dormant yet ;
 ie moment lurks my fate !

Each moment on the former side
While man is growing, life is
And cradles rock us nearer to
Our birth is nothing but our death
As tapers waste that instant time
Shall we then fear lest that
Which comes to pass each moment
If fear we must, let that Death
Which murders strength and art
Should rather call on Death, than
Ye partners of my fault, and my
Thoughtless of death, but when ye
(Rude visitant !) knocks hard at
And with its thunder scarce obtain
Be death your theme, in every place
Nor longer want, ye monumental
A brother tomb to tell you—you
That death you dread, (so great is
Know you shall court, before you
But you are learn'd : in volume
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance
Would you be still more learned
Learn well to know how

THE RELAPSE.

95

science for distinguish'd names,
 fomentation of your pride,
 virtue as you rise in fame.
 ing, like the lunar beam, affords 750
 not heat ; it leaves you undevout,
 heart, while speculation shines.
 curious indagators! fond
 ; all, but what avails you known.
 ld learn Death's character, attend. 755
 conduct, all degrees of health,
 fortune, and all dates of age,
 book in his impartial urn,
 at random ; or, if choice is made,
 is quite sarcastic, and insults 760
 jecture and fond hopes of man.
 less multitudes not only leave,
 disappoint us, by their deaths!
 at our sorrow, greater our surprise.
 or tyrants, Death delights to smite 765
 ten, most proclaims the pride of power
 ry nod. His joy supreme,
 wretch survive the fortunate ;
 wrap the' athletic in his shroud ;
 g fathers build their children's tomb : 770
 sarcissa !—What, though short thy date ?
 rolling suns, the mind matures.
 long which answers life's great end.
 at bears no fruit deserves no name.
 wisdom is the man of years. 775
 uth Methusalems may die ;
 lated on their flattering tombs !
 youth has lectured me thus far :
 r gaiety give counsel too ?
 he Jews' famed oracle of gems, 780
 struction ; such as throws new light,
 more the character of Death,
 thee, Lorenzo ! this thy vaunt !—
 his due, the wretched and the old ;

E'en let him sweep his rubbish to the grave ; 765
 Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
 But own man born to live as well as die.'—
 Wretched and old thou givest him ; young and gay
 He takes ; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.
 What if I prove, ' the farthest from the fear 790
 Are often nearest to the stroke of Fate ?'

All, more than common, menaces an end.
 A blaze betokens brevity of life :
 As if bright embers should emit a flame,
 Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye, 795
 And made Youth younger, and taught Life to live.
 As Nature's opposites wage endless war,
 For this offence, as treason to the deep
 Inviolable stupor of his reign,
 Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep, 800
 Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
 More life is still more odious ; and, reduced
 By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.
 But wherefore aggrandized ?—By Heaven's decree
 To plant the soul on her eternal guard, 805
 In awful expectation of our end.
 Thus runs Death's dread commission : ' Strike, but so
 As most alarms the living by the dead.'
 Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,
 And cruel sport with man's securities. 810
 Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim ;
 And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.
 This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep ?
 Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up 815
 In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.
 Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,
 Who travel under cover, Death assumes
 The name and look of Life, and dwells among us :
 He takes all shapes that serve his black designs : 820
 Though master of a wider empire far
 Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew,

THE RELAPSE.

97

hero, he's a fiddler, charioteer :
 'es his phaeton in female guise ;
 unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath, 825
 array'd oblation he devours.
 most affects the forms least like himself,
 nder self: hence burly corpulence
 amiliar wear, and sleek disguise.
 the rosy bloom he loves to lurk, 830
 ush in a smile ; or, wanton, dive
 les deep ; Love's eddies, which draw in
 7 hearts, and sink them in despair.
 1 Narcissa's couch he loiter'd long
 vn, and when detected, still was seen 835
 le : such peace has Innocence in death !
 happy they, whom least his arts deceive !
 e on Death, and one full fix'd on Heaven,
 is a mortal and immortal man.
 1 his wiles a piqued and jealous spy, 840
 n, or dream'd I saw, the tyrant dress,
 his horrors, and put on his smiles.
 use ! for thou remember'st, call it back,
 w Lorenzo the surprising scene ;
 a dream, his genius can explain. 845
 : in a circle of the gay I stood :
 ould have enter'd ; Nature push'd him back :
 ed by a doctor of renown,
 it he gain'd ; then artfully dismiss'd
 e ; for Death design'd to be conceal'd : 850
 : an old vivacious usurer
 gre aspect, and his naked bones,
 ude for plumping up his prey,
 er'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,
 hion'd figure, and cockaded brow, 855
 in change, and underneath the pride
 y linen tuck'd his filthy shroud.
 ked bow he straightened to a cane,
 his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.
 adful masquerader thus equipp'd, 860

Outsallies on adventures. Ask you where ?
Where is he not ? For his peculiar haunts
Let this suffice ; sure as night follows day,
Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the wor
When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shu
When against Reason, Riot shuts the door,
And Gaiety supplies the place of Sense,
Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die,
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,
Inly he laughs to see them laugh at him,
As absent far ; and when the revel burns,
When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,
Against him turns the key, and bids him sup
With their progenitors—he drops his mask,
Frowns out at full : they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,
From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire,
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And more than simple conquest, in the fiend ?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commision'd to destroy ?
In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.
Is death uncertain ? therefore thou be fix'd,
Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul
And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be stron
Thus give each day the merit and renown
Of dying well, though doom'd but once to die ;
Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from most)
Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.
Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate :

THE RELAPSE.

99

Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid :
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way, 900
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die ;

Though Fortune, too (our third and final theme,)
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,
And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,
To dazzle and debauch it from its mark. 905

Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
And every thought that misses it is blind.
Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspired
To weave a triple wreath of happiness, 910
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow :

And could Death charge through such a shining shield ?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,
As if to damp our elevated aims,
And strongly preach humility to man.
O how portentous is prosperity ! 915

How, cometlike, it threatens while it shines !
Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,
To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.

When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er 920
With recent honours, bloom'd with every bliss,
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
The gaudy centre, of the public eye ;

When Fortune, thus, has toss'd her child in air,
Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state, 925
How often have I seen him dropp'd at once,
Our morning's envy ! and our evening's sigh !

As if her bounties were the signal given,
The flowery wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
And call Death's arrows on the destined prey. 930

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.
Ask you for what ? to give his war on man
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil ;
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime 935
Of life ? to hang his airy nest on high,

On the slight timber of the topmost bough,
 Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall ?
 Granting grim Death at equal distance there,
 Yet peace begins just where ambition ends. 940

What makes man wretched ? Happiness denied ?

Lorenzo ! no ; 'tis Happiness disdain'd !

She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,

And calls herself Content, a homely name !

Our flame is transport, and Content our scorn ! 945

Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,

And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead ;

A tempest to warm transport near of kin.

Unknowing what our mortal state admits,

Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise, 950

And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace ;

Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth !

Of fortune fond ! as thoughtless of thy fate

As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up 955

Thy wholesome fears ; now, drawn in contrast, see

Gay Fortune's thy vain hopes to reprimand.

See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,

Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,

And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad 960

Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.

All rush rapacious ; friends o'er trodden friends,

Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,

Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,

(Still more adored) to snatch the golden shower. 965

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more ;

As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.

O what a precious pack of votaries,

Unkennel'd from the prisons and the stews,

Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise ! 970

All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,

And, wide expanding their voracious jaws,

Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,

Untasted, through mad appetite for more ;

Gorged to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still : 975
 Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,
 And bold to seize the greatest. If (bless'd chance !)
 Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe ; they launch, they fly,
 O'er just, o'er sacred, all-forbidden ground,
 Drunk with the burning scent of place or power, 980
 Stanch to the foot of Lucre—till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark
 Their manners, thou their various fates survey.
 With aim mismeasured and impetuous speed,
 Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off, 985
 Through fury to possess it : some succeed,
 But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.
 From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,
 And lodged in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.
 To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off, 990
 Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
 Some, o'er enamour'd of their bags, run mad ;
 Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
 Together some (unhappy rivals !) seize,
 And rend abundance into poverty : 995
 Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles ;
 Smiles, too, the goddess ; but smiles most at those
 (Just victims of exorbitant desire !)
 Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd
 Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire. 1000
 Fortune is famous for her numbers slain ;
 The number small which happiness can bear.
 Though various for a while their fates, at last
 One curse involves them all : at Death's approach
 All read their riches backward into loss, 1005
 And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)
 Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.
 And art thou still a glutton of bright gold ?
 And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin ? 1010
*Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow ;
 A blow which, while it executes, alarms,*

And startles thousands with a signal fall.
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
 Which nods aloft and proudly spreads her shade, 1015
 The Sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,
 By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdued
 Loud groans her last ; and rushing from her height,
 In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground ;
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock, 1020
 And hill, and stream, and distant dale resound.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,
 Should I collect, my quiver would be full ;
 A quiver which, suspended in mid air,
 Or near heaven's archer, in the zodiac, hung 1025
 (So could it be,) should draw the public eye,
 The gaze and contemplation of mankind !
 A constellation awful, yet benign,
 To guide the gay through Life's tempestuous wave,
 Nor suffer them to strike the common rock ; 1030
 ' From greater danger to grow more secure,
 And, wrapp'd in happiness, forget their fate.'

Lysander, happy past the common lot,
 Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.
 He woo'd the fair Aspasia ; she was kind. 1035
 In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bless'd :
 All who knew envied ; yet in envy loved :
 Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness ?
 Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
 Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires
 Float in the wave, and break against the shore ; 1041
 So break those glittering shadows, human joys.
 The faithless morning smiled : he takes his leave
 To reembrace, in ecstasies, at eve :
 The rising storm forbids : the news arrives ; 1045
 Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.
 She felt it seen (her heart was apt to feel,)
 And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
In suffocating sorrows shares his tomb.
Now round the sumptuous bridal monument 1050

flows innocently roar,
h sailor, passing, drops a tear.
tears suffice?—but not for me.
efforts! and our arts how vain!
ain of thought I took, to shun, 1055
ie on my fate.—These died together;
! undivorced by death!
eet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—
y bleeds at thought of thee;
only near me, not myself. 1060
lf?—that cures all other woe.
; Philander is forgot.
nmerce!—O the tender ties,
with the fibres of the heart!
t, break them, and drain off the soul 1065
, and make it pain to live.—
to live? When such friends part,
vor dies.—My heart! no more.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.
IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING THE
NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMORTALITY

PART I.

PART 1.
WHERE, AMONG OTHER THINGS,
GLORY AND RICHES ARE PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

Few ages have been deeper in dispute about religion. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, 'Is man immortal, or is he not?' If he is not, all our discourses, our amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, the only pleasures, which give our discourses such point and meaning in them: but if man is immortal, it will be to be very serious about eternal consequences; to be very religious. And this great first truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is the real source and support of all our errors. I conceive, the real source and support of all our errors, how remote soever the particular objections appear to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much in
abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies draw
but the soul is invisible. The power which is
over the judgment is greater than can be we

that have not had an experience of it; and of what number is it the sad interest that souls should not survive? The *en* world confessed that they rather hoped, than firmly *red*, immortality! and how many heathens have we still *gst* us! The Sacred Page assures us, that 'life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel;' but by how many Gospel rejected or overlooked? From these considerations and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of particular persons, I have been long persuaded that if not all our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in tenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality, at the bottom: I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of immortality, are not far from being Christians: for it is so conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or *ness* will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and *tionally* inquire after the surest means of escaping one, and *ag* the other: and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry we well know the consequence.

e, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from *ables* which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give *elves* the small trouble of looking seriously into their own *s*, and of observing with any tolerable degree of attention what daily passes round about them in the world. If some *ents* shall here occur which others have declined, they *mitted*, with all deference, to better judgments, in *this*, points, the most important! for as to the being of a God, no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason *riz*. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable: and, of consequence, *n* can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity which has a principal share in animating our modern combats against other articles of our belief.

RIGHT HONOURABLE

FIRST LORD COMMISSIONER

CHANCELLOR OF TI

SHE* (for I know not yet he
 Not early, like Narcissa, left
 Nor sudden, like Philander.
 This seeming mitigation but
 This fancied medicine height
 The longer known, the close
 And gradual parting is a gra
 'Tis the grim tyrant's engine
 By tardy pressure's still incre
 From hardest hearts confessi
 O the long dark approach,
 Death's gallery ! (might I da
 With dismal doubt and sable
 Sick Hope's pale lamp its onl
 There Fate my melancholy v
 Forbid self-love itself to flatte
 How oft I gazed, prophetical
 How oft I saw her dead, whil

| | |
|--|-----|
| INFIDEL RECLAIMED. | 107 |
| deadly siege ; in spite of art, | |
| blessings Nature lends | 26 |
| humanity. Ye Stars ! | |
| made familiar to my sight) | |
| on ! bear witness ; many a night | |
| now from beneath my head, | |
| more attention to the shock, | 20 |
| predations on a life | |
| that he left me. Dreadful post | |
| darker every hour ! | |
| lay that drove me to the brink, | |
| eternity below ; | 35 |
| hudderd at futurity ; | |
| ment's point, the' important dis | |
| a spun doubtful, ere it fell, | |
| fe ; my title to more woe. | |
| roe ? more comfort let it be. | 40 |
| but that which wished to die ; | |
| , but wretchedness and pain ; | |
| , but what encumber'd, gall'd, | |
| pass, and barr'd from real life. | |
| what wish most ardent of the wise ? | 45 |
| in to see it ; highest stars | |
| h it ; Death, great Death alone, | |
| sun triumphant, lands us there | |
| our transition, though the mind, | |
| ating self-alarms, | 50 |
| nts for inquietude, | |
| t it dreadful. Who can take | |
| true ? the tyrant never sat. | |
| andom strokes, conjecture all ; | |
| grave, nor tells one single tale, | 55 |
| nage rising in the brain | |
| blance ; never are alike | |
| pencil : Fancy loves excess : | |
| is lavish of her shades ; | |
| ormidable picture draw. | 60 |
| worst, 'tis past ; new prospects rise, | |

And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
 Far other views our contemplation claim,
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life ;
 Views that suspend our agonies in death.
 Wrapp'd in the thought of immortality,
 Wrapp'd in the single, the triumphant thought !
 Long life might lapse, age unperceived come on,
 And find the soul unsated with her theme.
 Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my song.
 O that my song could emulate my soul !
 Like her immortal. No !—the soul disdains
 A mark so mean ; far nobler hope inflames ;
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
 Let not the laurel, but the palm inspire.

Thy nature, Immortality ! who knows ?
 And yet who knows it not ? it is but life
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
 And spun for ever ; dipp'd by cruel Fate
 In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle, here ;
 How short our correspondence with the Sun !
 And while it lasts, inglorious ! our best deeds
 How wanting in their weight ! our highest joys
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,
 And give us strength to suffer. But how great
 To mingle interests, converse, amities,
 With all the sons of Reason, scatter'd wide
 Through habitable space, wherever born,
 Howe'er endow'd ! to live free citizens
 Of universal Nature ! to lay hold,
 By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme !
 To call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines
 (Mines which support archangels in their state)
 Our own ! to rise in science as in bliss,
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies !
 To read Creation ; read its mighty plan
 In the bare bosom of the Deity !
The plan and execution to collate !
To see, before each glance of piercing thought,

INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 100

shadow, blown remote ; and leave 100

but that of Love Divine,

on the seraph's flaming wing,

sceldama, this field of blood,

ish, and of outward ill,

and from dust, to such a scene ! 105

! true joy's illustrious home !

ad contrast (now deplored) more fair !

vicissitude of Fate !

on of our blackest hour !

ese are thoughts that make man man,

ine, aggrandize the great. 111

ile yet we tread the kindred clod,

nent tear to sink beneath

ead, soon trodden by our sons)

the wild whirl of Time's pursuits, 115

use ; involved in high presage,

ng vista of a thousand years,

mplating our distant selves,

ying mirror seen,

bled, elevate, divine ! 120

ur own futurities !

ight on what all thought transcends !

How-candidates, of joys

conception as desert,

astonished talkers and the tale ! 125

ells thy bosom at the thought ?

mes thee : 'tis an honest pride !

—and yet thyself despise.

can can o'errate, and none

his merit. Take good heed, 130

odest where thou shouldst be proud ;

iversal error shun.

ride, when we behold those heights !

tion paints in air, but those

eat, and ardent Virtue gains, 135

late. Our pride how just !

! ? when these shackles cast ? when quit

This cell of the creation ? this small nest,
 Stuck in a corner of the universe,
 Wrapp'd up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air ? 14
 Fine-spun to sense, but gross and feculent
 To souls celestial ; souls ordain'd to breathe
 Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky ;
 Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,
 Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears, 14
 While Pomp imperial begs an alms of Peace.

In empire high, or in proud science deep,
 Ye horn of Earth ! on what can you confer,
 With half the dignity, with half the gain,
 The gust, the glow, of rational delight, 15
 As on this theme, which angels praise and share ?
 Man's fates and favours are a theme in Heaven.

What wretched repetition cloy's us here !
 What periodic potions for the sick !
 Distemper'd bodies and distemper'd minds ! 15
 In an eternity what scenes shall strike !
 Adventures thicken ! novelties surprise !
 What webs of wonder shall unravel there !
 What full day pour on all the paths of Heaven,
 And light the' Almighty footsteps in the deep ! 16
 How shall the blessed day of our discharge
 Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,
 And straighten its inextricable maze !

If inextinguishable thirst in man
 To know ; how rich, how full, our banquet there ! 16
 There, not the moral world alone unfolds ;
 The world material, lately seen in shades,
 And in those shades by fragments only seen,
 And seen those fragments by the labouring eye,
 Unbroken, then, illustrious and entire, 17
 Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
 In full dimensions, swells to the survey,
 And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.
*From some superior point (where, who can tell ?
 Suffice it, 'tis a point, where gods reside.)*

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 111

the stranger-man's illumined eye,
ocean of unbounded space,
infinite of floating worlds
crystal waves of ether pure,
voyage without port? The least 180
assemminated orbs how great!

They are, what numbers these surpass,
Leviathan to that small race,
shaking multitudes of little life,
as unperceived! Stupendous these? 185
are these stupendous to the whole?

Yes, as atoms ill perceived;
floating globules in our veins;
a plan. Fecundity divine!

Source! perhaps I wrong thee still. 190
Creation is a source of joy,
sport hence? yet this the least in Heaven.
to that illustrious robe He wears,
and this mass of wonders from his hand,
and, an earnest, of his power? 195

That glory, whence all glory flows,
and ad's meanest floweret to the Sun,
and its birth. But what this Sun of Heaven?
the supreme of the supremely bless'd?
By death, the question can resolve. 200
cheap bought the' ideas of our joy;
ideas! solid happiness.

from its shadow chased below.
use we still the phantom through the fire,
and brake, and precipice, till death? 205
we still for sublunary pay?

dangers of the field and flood,
like, spin out our precious all,
than vitals spin (if no regard
to futurity,) in curious webs 210
thought and exquisite design,
work of the brain!) to catch a fly!

The momentary buzz of vain renown !

A name ! a mortal immortality !

Or (meaner still) instead of grasping air,

For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire ?

Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain

For vile contaminating trash ! throw up

Our hope in Heaven, our dignity with man,

And deify the dirt matured to gold ?

Ambition, Avarice, the two demons these

Which goad through every slough our human herd

Hard-travel'd from the cradle to the grave.

How low the wretches stoop ! how steep they climb

These demons burn mankind, but most possess

Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide eternity ?

And why not in an atom on the shore

To cover ocean ? or a mote, the Sun ?

Glory and wealth ! have they this blinding power ?

What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind ?

Would it surprise thee ? be thou then surprised ;

Thou neither know'st : their nature learn from me

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,

What close connexion ties them to my theme.

First, what is true ambition ? The pursuit

Of glory nothing less than man can share.

Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,

As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,

Their arts and conquests animals might boast,

And claim their laurel-crowns as well as we ;

But not celestial. Here we stand alone,

As in our form distinct, preeminent :

If prone in thought, our stature is our shame ;

And man should blush, his forehead meets the sky

The visible and present are for brutes :

A slender portion, and a narrow bound !

These Reason, with an energy divine,

O'erleaps, and claims the future and unseen,

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 113

The vast unseen ! the future fathomless ! 250

When the great soul buoys up to this high point,

Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,

Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits

The sage and hero of the fields and woods,

Asserts his rank, and rises into man. 255

This is ambition ; this is human fire !

Can parts or place (two bold pretenders) make

Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng ?

Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,

Our boast but ill deserve : a feeble aid ! 260

Dedalian enginery ! If these alone

Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.

Heart merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,

Our height is but the gibbet of our name.

A celebrated wretch when I behold, 265

When I behold a genius bright and base,

Of towering talents and terrestrial aims,

Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,

The glorious fragments of a soul immortal, 270

With rubbish mix'd, and glittering in the dust :

Struck at the splendid melancholy sight,

At once compassion soft and envy rise——

But wherefore envy ? Talents angel-bright,

If wanting worth, are shining instruments

In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults 275

Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.

Great ill is an achievement of great powers.

Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.

Reason the means, Affections choose our end.

Means have no merit, if our end amiss. 280

If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain

What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart ?

Hearts are proprietors of all applause.

Right ends and means make wisdom, worldly wise

Is but half witted at its highest praise. 285

Let genius, then, despair to make thee great ;
Nor flatter station. What is station high ?

'Tis a proud mendicant: it boasts and begs;
 It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
 And oft the throng denies its charity. 2
 Monarchs and ministers are awful names!
 Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.
 Religion, public Order, both exact
 External homage and a supple knee,
 To beings pompously set up, to serve 2
 The meanest slave: all more is Merit's due,
 Her sacred and inviolable right;
 Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.
 Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth;
 Nor ever fall of their allegiance there. 36
 Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,
 And vote the mantle into majesty.
 Let the small savage boast his silver fur,
 His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,
 His own, descending fairly from his sires; 30
 Shall man be proud to wear his livery,
 And souls in exile scorn a soul without?
 Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?
 Pigmies are pigmies still, though perch'd on Alps,
 And pyramids are pyramids in vales. 34
 Each man makes his own stature, builds himself
 Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;
 Her monuments shall last, when Egypt's fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?
 The cause is lodged in immortality. 31

Hear, and assent. Thy beam burns for power;
 What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;
 'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?
 Then thou before wast something less than man.
 Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride? 30
 That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;
 That pride defames humanity, and calls

*The being mean which staffs or strings can raise:
 That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,
 From blindness bold, and towering to the skies.* ?

'Tis born of Ignorance, which knows not man :

An angel's second, nor his second long.

A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,
And courting glory from the tinkling string,

But faintly shadows an immortal soul,

339

With empire's self to pride or rapture fired.

If nobler motives minister no cure,

E'en vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place : 'tis more,

It makes the post stand candidate for thee ;

336

Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man.

Though no Exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth ;

And though it wears no ribband, 'tis renown :

Renown, that would not quit thee though disgraced,

Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.

340

Other ambition Nature interdicts ;

Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,

By pointing at his origin and end ;

Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand ;

His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone ;

346

To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls, truly great, dart forward on the wing

Of just Ambition, to the grand result,

The curtain's fall ; there see the buskin'd chief

Unshod behind this momentary scene,

350

Reduced to his own stature, low or high,

As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes ;

And laugh at this fantastic mummery,

This antic prelude of grotesque events,

Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray

356

A littleness of soul by worlds o'errun,

And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice

To Christian pride ! which had with horror shock'd

The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

360

O thou Most Christian enemy to peace !

Again in arms ? again provoking Fate ?

That prince, and that alone, is truly great,

Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheaths ;

On empire builds what empire far-outweighs,
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies !

Why this so rare ?—because, forgot of all
The day of death, that venerable day
Which sits as judge ; that day, which shall pronounce
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.
Lorenzo ! never shut thy thought against it :
Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room ;
And give it audience in the cabinet.
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that ambition ? then let flames descend,
Point to the centre their inverted spires,
And learn humiliation from a soul
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.
Yet these are they the world pronounces wise ;
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong
And casts new wisdom : e'en the grave man lends
His solemn face to countenance the coin.
Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,
The most ambitious unambitious, mean,
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.
Nothing can make it less than mad in man
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,
But reaching Him who gave her wings to fly.
When blind Ambition quite mistakes her road,
And downward pores for that which shines above,
Substantial happiness and true renown ;
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud ;
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition ! powerful source of good and ill !
*Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds
When disengaged from earth with greater ease.*

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

117

Her flight, transports us to the skies :
 Entangled, or in guilt bemired,
 A curse ; it is our chain and scourge,
 Ark dungeon, where confined we lie, 405
 Uted by the sordid bars of sense,
 Set of eternity shut out ;
 For execution, ne'er set free.
 Error in ambition justly charged,
 Lorenzo wiser in his wealth ? 410
 Why rental I reform, and draw
 Tory new to set thee right ?
 My true treasure ? Gold says, ' Not in me :'
 It in me, the Diamond. Gold is poor ;
 Solvent : seek it in thyself ; 415
 Why naked self, and find it there ;
 So descended, form'd, endow'd ;
 , sky-guided, sky-returning race !
 Mortal, rational, divine !
 , which inherit earth and heavens : 420
 ; various riches Nature yields ?
 r ! give the riches they enjoy ;
 e to fruits, and harmony to groves ;
 iant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire ;
 at once, the landscape of the world, 425
 I inlet, which a grain might close,
 create the wondrous world they see.
 s, as our reason, are divine.
 he magic organ's powerful charm,
 re a rude uncolour'd chaos still. 430
 re but the' occasion, ours the exploit ;
 he cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
 aturo's admirable picture draws,
 tifies Creation's ample dome.
 on's Eve, when gazing on the lake, 435
 es the matchless image man admires.
 ; shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,
 vonders in himself forgot,
 tion waste on objects round,

When Heaven makes him the soul of all he sees?
Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth
In fancy, fired to form a fairer scene
Than sense surveys! in Memory's firm record,
Which, should it perish, could this world recal
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!
In colours fresh, originally bright,
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!
What wealth in intellect, that sovereign power!
Which sense and fancy summons to the bar:
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;
And from the mass those underlings import,
From their materials sifted and refined,
And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,
Forms art and science, government and law,
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,
The vitals, and the grace of civil life!
And manners (sad exception!) set aside,
Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair
Of his idea, whose indulgent thought
Long, long ere Chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around
Disdaining limit or from place or time;
And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear
The' Almighty Fiat, and the trumpet's sound!
Bold, on Creation's outside walk, and view
What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;
Commanding with omnipotence of thought,
Creations new, in Fancy's field to rise!
Souls that can grasp whate'er the' Almighty made,
And wander wild through things impossible!
What wealth in faculties of endless growth,
In quenchless passions violent to crave,
In liberty to choose, in power to reach,
And in duration (how thy riches rise!)
Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!
Ask you what power resides in feeble man,

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED: 119

bliss to gain? Is Virtue's then, unknown?
 ! our present peace, our future prize.
 unprecious, natural estate, 480
 veable at will, in virtue lies;
 ure sure, its income is divine.
 h built abundance, heap on heap! for what?
 ed new wants, and beggar us the more;
 make a richer scramble for the throng? 485
 us this feeble pulse, which leaps so long,
 t by miracle, is tired with play,
 ubbish, from dislodging engines thrown,
 agazines of hoarded trifles fly;
 verse; fly to foreigners, to foes; 490
 asters court, and call the former fool,
 justly!) for dependence on their stay.
 scatter, first, our playthings! then, our dust.
 t court abundance for the sake of peace?
 , and lament thy self-defeated scheme. * 495
 : enable to be richer still,
 cher still what mortal can resist?
 Wealth (a cruel task-master!) enjoins
 oils, succeeding toils, an endless train!
 murders Peace, which taught it first to shine. 500
 oor are half as wretched as the rich;
 : proud and painful privilege it is
 e to bear a double load of woe,
 d the stings of envy and of want,
 geous want! both Indies cannot cure. 505
 ompetence is vital to Content;
 wealth is corpulence, if not disease:
 or encumber'd, is our happiness.
 petence is all we can enjoy.
 ontent, where Heaven can give no more! 510
 like a flash of water from a lock,
 ens our spirit's movement for an hour,
 on *its force is spent*; nor rise our joys
 our *native temper's common stream*.
Disappointment lurks in every prize, - 515
 in flowers, and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,
 Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.
 Much learning shows how little mortals know ;
 Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy :
 At best it babies us with endless toys,
 And keeps us children till we drop to dust.
 As monkeys at a mirror stand amazed,
 They fail to find what they so plainly see :
 Thus men, in shining riches, see the face
 Of Happiness, nor know it is a shade ;
 But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,
 And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want !
 Who lives to nature rarely can be poor ;
 Who lives to fancy never can be rich.
 Poor is the man in debt ; the man of gold,
 In debt to Fortune, trembles at her power :
 The man of reason smiles at her and death.
 O what a patrimony this ! a being
 Of such inherent strength and majesty,
 Not worlds possess'd can raise it ; worlds destroy'd
 Can't injure ; which holds on its glorious course,
 When thine, O Nature ! ends : too bless'd to mourn
 Creation's obsequies. What treasure this !
 The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal ! ages pass'd, yet nothing gone !
 Morn without eve ! a race without a goal !
 Unshorten'd by progression infinite !
 Futurity for ever future ! life
 Beginning still where computation ends !
 'Tis the description of a deity !
 'Tis the description of the meanest slave !
 The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn ?
 The meanest slave thy sovereign glory shares.
 Proud youth ! fastidious of the lower world !
 Man's lawful pride includes humility ;
 Stoops to the lowest ; is too great to find
 Inferiors ; all immortal ! brothers all !
 Proprietors eternal of thy love !

Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,
 As this the soul? it thunders to the thought,
 Reason amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms:
 No more we slumber on the brink of Fate;
 Roused at the sound, the' exulting soul ascends 560
 And breathes her native air, an air that feeds
 Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;
 Quick kindles all that is divine within us,
 Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame? 565
 Immortal! were but one immortal, how
 Would others envy! how would thrones adore!
 Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?
 How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven!
 O vain, vain, vain, all else! Eternity! 570

A glorious and a needful refuge that,
 From vile imprisonment in abject views.
 'Tis Immortality, 'tis that alone,
 Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
 The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill: 575

That only, and that amply, this performs;
 Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;
 Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;
 Eternity depending covers all;
 Eternity depending all achieves; 580

Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;
 Blends her distinctions; abrogates her powers;
 The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
 Fortune's dread frowns and fascinating smiles,
 Make one promiscuous and neglected heap, 585
 The man beneath; if I may call him man,
 Whom Immortality's full force inspires.

Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;
 Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
 By minds quite conscious of their high descent, 590
 Their present province, and their future prize;
 Divinely darting upward every wish,
 Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!

Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?
 If earth's whole orb, by some due-distant eye 595
 Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
 And level'd Atlas leave an even sphere.

Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
 Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.
 To that stupendous view, when souls awake, 600
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,
 Time's toys subside, and equal all below.

Enthusiastic this?—then all are weak
 But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
 Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled: 605
 And all may do what has by man been done.

Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh
 Unraptured, unexalted, uninflamed?
 What slave unblest'd, who from to-morrow's dawn 610
 Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,
 And, throned in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!
 Her own immense appointments to compute,
 Or comprehend her high prerogatives, 615
 In this her dark minority, how toils,
 How vainly pants, the human soul divine!
 Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy:
 What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung, 620
 Ne'er to be prized enough! enough revolved!
 Are there who wrap the world so close about them,
 They see no farther than the clouds, and dance
 On heedless Vanity's fantastic too,
 Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career, 625
 Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?
 Are there, Lorenzo? Is it possible?
 Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
 Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,
 Unconscious as the mountain of its ore, 630
 Or rock of its inestimable gem?

rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these
 now their treasure ; treasure them no more.
 there (still more amazing !) who resist
 sing thought ? who smother, in its birth, 635
 orious truth ? who struggle to be brutes !
 brough this bosom-barrier burst their way,
 with reversed ambition, strive to sink ?
 labour downwards through the' opposing powers
 inct, reason, and the world against them, 640
 mal hopes, and shelter in the shock
 less night ? night darker than the grave's ?
 ght the proofs of Immortality ?
 horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
 all their engines, level their black fires, 645
 t from man this attribute divine,
 vital blood far dearer to the wise)
 emers and rank atheists to themselves ?
 contradict them, see all Nature rise !
 object, what event, the moon beneath, 650
 gues, or endears, an after-scene ?
 son proves, or weds it to desire ?
 ngs proclaim it needful ; some advance'
 recious step beyond, and prove it sure.
 isand arguments swarm round my pen, 655
 Heaven, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,
 ture, as her common habit, worn ;
 assing Providence, a truth to teach,
 i truth untaught, all other truths were vain.
 u ! whose all-providential eye surveys, 660
 e hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
 on, and holds empire far beyond '
 ty's Inhabitant august !
 o eternities, amazing Lord !
 ass'd, ere man's or angel's had begun ; 665
 while I rescue from the foe's assault
 orious immortality in man ;
 ie for ever, and for all, of weight,
 ent, infinite ! but relish'd most
 e who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
 Of thee the great Immutable, to man
 Speaks wisdom ; is his oracle supreme ;
 And he who most consults her is most wise.
 Lorenzo ! to this heavenly Delphos haste, 675
 And come back all immortal, all divine.
 Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all ;
 All change, no death : day follows night, and night
 The dying day : stars rise, and set, and rise :
 Earth takes the' example. See, the Summer gay, 680
 With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
 Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter gray,
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
 Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away,
 Then melts into the Spring : soft Spring, with breath
 Favonian, from warm chambers of the south, 686
 Recals the first. All, to reflowerish, fades :
 As in a wheel, all sinks to reascend :
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just, 690
 Nature revolves, but man advances ; both
 Eternal : that a circle, this a line :

That gravitates, this soars. The' aspiring soul,
 Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,
 Zeal and humility her wings, to Heaven. 695
 The world of matter, with its various forms,
 All dies into new life. Life born from Death
 Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.

No single atom, once in being, lost,
 With change of counsel charges the Most High. 700

What hence infers Lorenzo ? Can it be ?

Matter immortal ? and shall spirit die ?

Above the nobler shall less noble rise ?

Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,

No resurrection know ? shall man alone, 705

Imperial man ! be sown in barren ground,

Less privileged than grain on which he feeds :

Is man, in whom alone is power to prize

The bliss of being, or, with previous pain,

INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 125
 ied, by the spleen of Fate, 710
 d Death's single unredeem'd ?
 evolution speaks aloud
 n, hear her louder still.
 ough, 'tis neat gradation all.
 e degrees her scale ascends ! 715
 ture join'd at each extreme ;
 t join'd, to that beneath.
 reciprocally shot,
 What love of union roigns !
 matter waits a call to life ; 720
 eath, join there : here life and sense,
 m reason steals a glimmering ray ;
 out in man. But how preserved
 oken upward, to the realms
 life ? those realms of bliss, 725
 ath no dominion ? Grant a make
 lf immortal ; earthy part,
 al : grant the soul of man
 an the series ends.
 a gap ; connexion is no more ; 730
 a halts ; her next step wants support ;
 ab, she tumbles from her scheme,
 ogy pronounced so true ;
 s surest guide below.
 Nature calls on thy belief ; 735
 zo, careless of the call,
 a on all Nature charge,
 late his league with Death ?
 eason, rather than renounce
 ed, and run the risk of Heaven ? 740
 ty to deathless souls !
 o the majesty of man !
 al ! hear the lofty style :
 the' Almighty Will be done.
 ve, yon ponderous orbs descend, 745
 to dust. The soul is safe ;
 es ; mounts above the wreck.

As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre :
 O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles ;
 His charter his inviolable rights,
 Well pleased to learn from Thunder's impotence,
 Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms.'

750

But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo !
 The glories of the world thy sevenfold shield.
 Other ambition than of crowns in air,
 And superlunary-felicities,
 Thy bosom warms. I'll cool it, if I can ;
 And turn those glories that enchant, against thee.
 What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.
 If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.

755

760

Come, my Ambitious ! let us mount together,
 (To mount Lorenzo never can refuse !)
 And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,
 Look down on earth.—Wha' seest thou ? wondrous
 things !

Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies.
 What lengths of labour'd lands ; what loaded seas !
 Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war !
 Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
 His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.

765

Nor can the' eternal rocks his will withstand :
 What level'd mountains ! and what lifted vales !
 O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
 And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.

770

Some mid the wondering waves majestic rise,
 And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.
 Far greater still ! (what cannot mortal might ?)
 See, wide dominions ravish'd from the deep !
 The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.

775

Or southward turn, to delicate and grand,
 The finer arts there ripen in the Sun.

780

How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
 Ascend the skies ! the proud triumphal arch
 Shows us half heaven beneath its ample bend.

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Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep. 785

Here plains turn oceans ; there vast oceans join,
Through kingdoms channel'd deep from shore to shore,
And changed Creation takes its face from man.

Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword? 790

See fields in blood ; hear naval thunders rise ;
Britannia's voice ! that awes the world to peace.

How yon enormous mole projecting breaks
The mid-sea, furious waves ! their roar amidst
Outspeaks the Deity, and says, ' O Main ! 795

Thus far, nor farther ; new restraints obey.
Earth's disembowel'd ! measured are the skies !

Stars are detected in their deep recess !
Creation widens ! vanquish'd Nature yields !
Her secrets are extorted ! Art prevails ! 800

What monument of genius, spirit, power !

And now, Lorenzo ! raptur'd at this scene,
Whose glories render heaven superfluous ! say,
Whose footsteps these ?—Immortals have been here
Could less than souls immortal this have done ? 806
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal,
And proofs of Immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess
These are Ambition's works ; and these are great :
But this, the least immortal souls can do, 810

Transcends them all.—But what can these transcend ?
Dost ask me what ?—one sigh for the distress'd.

What then for Infidels ? a deeper sigh.
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man !
How little they, who think aught great below ! 815

All our ambitions Death defeats but one,
And that it crowns.—Here cease we ; but ere long,
More powerful proof shall take the field against thee,
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

AS WE ARE at war with the manners of France. A land of
of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of
and the single character that does true honour
The soul's immortality has been the favourite
serious of all ages. Nor is it strange : it is a
the most interesting and important that can ent
man. Of highest moment this subject always
ways will be : yet this its highest moment seer
increase at this day ; a sort of occasional impor
added to the natural weight of it, if that opinio
vanced in the Preface to the preceding Night
there supposed that all our Infidels (whatever
argument's sake, and to keep themselves in cou
patronize) are betrayed into their deplorable
doubt of their immortality at the bottom : and
sider this point, the more I am persuaded of th
opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a
yet it is an error into which bad men may nat
tressed ; for it is impossible to bid defiance to
out some refuge in imagination, some presumpt
And what presumption is there ? there are but
but two within the compass of human thought ;
—That either God will not or cannot punish
the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be
strongest wishes : and since Omnipotence is ab

at the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large, and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me, are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of heathen antiquity : what pity it is they are not sincere ! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire. What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion,) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates (it is well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed ; yet this great master of temper was angry, and angry at his last hour ; and angry with his friend ; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment ; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising ? what could be the cause ?—The cause was for his honour : It was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for Immortality : for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, ‘ Where he should deposit his remains ? ’ it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates, or make them endeavour, by their imitation of his illustrious example, to share his glory ; and consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following with candour and impartiality : which is all I desire, and that, for their sakes : for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7, 1744.

CONTENTS

OF THE SEVENTH NIGHT.

In the ~~twelfth~~ Night, arguments were drawn from Nature in proof of Immortality: here, others are drawn from Man; from his discontent, from his passions and powers; from the gradual growth of reason, from his fear of death; from the nature of hope, and of virtue; from knowledge and love, as being the most essential properties of the soul; from the order of creation; from the nature of ambition, avarice, pleasure.—A digression on the grandeur of the passions.—Immortality alone renders our present state intelligible.—An objection from the Stoics' disbelief of immortality answered.—Endless questions unresolvable, but on supposition of our immortality.—The natural, most melancholy, and pathetic complaint of a worthy man, under the persuasion of no futurity.—The gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation urged home on Lorenzo.—The soul's vast importance; from whence it arises, &c.—The difficulty of being an Infidel; the infamy; the cause; and the character of an infidel state.—What true free-thinking is; the necessary punishment of the false.—Man's ruin is from himself.—An Infidel accuses himself of guilt and hypocrisy, and that of the worst sort; his obligations to Christians: what danger he incurs by virtue; vice recommended to him; his high pretences to virtue and benevolence exploded.—The conclusion, on the nature of faith, reason, and hope; with an apology for this attempt.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART THE SECOND.

HEAVEN gives the needful, but neglected call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?
Deaths stand, like Mercuries, in every way,
And kindly point us to our journey's end. 5
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?
I give thee joy; nor will I take my leave,
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death,
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise;
The grave, his subterranean road to bliss. 10
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;
Through various parts our glorious story runs;
Time gives the preface, endless ago unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.
This, earth and skies* already have proclaim'd. 15
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come,
And who, what God foretels (who speaks in things
Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man. 20
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himself: 25
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables: man was made a lie.

* See Night the Sixth.

Why discontent for ever harbour'd there ?
 Incurable consumption of our peace !
 Resolve me why the cottager and king,
 He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he
 Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
 Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,
 Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,
 In fate so distant, in complaint so near ?

Is it that things terrestrial can't content ?
 Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain ?
 Not so ; but to their master is denied
 To share that sweet serene. Man, ill at ease
 In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
 Where Nature foddors him with other food
 Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
 Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
 Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.
 Is Heaven then kinder to thy flocks than thee ?
 Not so ; thy pasture richer, but remote ;
 In part remote ; for that remoter part
 Man bleats from instinct, though, perhaps, debauch
 By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.
 The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes !
 His grief is but his grandeur in disguise,
 And discontent is immortality !

Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heaven,
 Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here,
 With brutal acquiescence in the mire ?
 Lorenzo ! no ; they shall be nobly pain'd :
 The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh
 On thrones, and thou congratulate the sigh.
 Man's misery declares him born for bliss ;
 His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,
 And gives the sceptic in his head—the lie.

Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our pow'
 Speak the same language ; call us to the skies :
 Unripen'd these, in this inclement clime,

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

123

his land of trifles those too strong
ous rise, and tempest human life.
ze on earth can pay us for the storm?
acts for our passions Heaven ordain'd, 70
hat challenge all their fire, and leave
out in defect. Bless'd Heaven! avert
d ardour for unbounded bliss!
liss unbounded! far beneath
mortal is a mortal joy. 75
our powers to perish immature;
feeble effort here, beneath
er sun, and in a nobler soil,
ated from this sublunary bed,
rish fair, and put forth all their bloom. 80
progressive, instinct is complete;
tinct leaps; slow Reason feebly climbs
on their zenith reach; their little all
at once; in ages they no more
ow, or do, or covet, or enjoy. 85
n to live coeval with the Sun,
harch-pupil would be learning still,
g, leave his lesson half-unlearn'd.
sh in advance, as if the Sun
st ere noon; in eastern oceans drown'd; 90
h dim, illustrious to compare,
's meridian with the soul of man.
why, stepdame Nature! so severe?
own aside thy masterpiece half-wrought,
eaner efforts thy last hand enjoy? 95
rtively, poor man must die,
h what reach he might, why die in dread?
sed with foresight? wise to misery?
his proud prerogative the prey?
preeminent in rank than pain? 100
ortality alone can tell;
le fund to balance all amiss,
the scale in favour of the just!
ortality alone can solve

That wish accomplish'd, why the great
Because in the great future buried
Beyond our means of empire and renown
Lies all that man with ardour should
And He who made him bent him to

Man's heart the' Almighty to the
By secret and inviolable springs ;
And makes his hope his sublunary joy
Man's heart eats all things, and is but
' More, more ! ' the glutton cries : for
So rages appetite ; if man can't mou
He will descend. He starves on the
Hence, the world's master, from Am
In Caprea plunged, and dived beneath
In that rank sty why wallow'd Emph
Supreme ?—Because he could no high
His riot was Ambition in despair.

Old Rome consulted birds : Lorenz
With more success the flight of Hope
Of restless Hope for ever on the wing
High perch'd o'er every thought that
To fly at all that rises in her sight :
And never stopping but to mount on

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ue self-interest pursued ;
 self-interest of quite mortal man ?
 th all that makes him happy here. 145
 ometimes) is our friend on earth,
 s virtue ; 'tis our sovereign good.
 use is virtue's golden prize ?
 ause attends it on thy scheme
 f-applause ? from conscience of the right ;
 s right, but means of happiness ? 151
 f happiness when virtue yields ;
 ailing falls the building too,
 ruin every virtuous joy.
 guardian of a blameless heart, 155
 ered, so long reputed wise,
 th rank knight-errantries o'errun.
 thy bosom with illustrious dreams
 sure, laudable and great ?
 enterprise, and glorious death ? 160
 country ?—thou romantic fool !
 the plank thyself, and let her sink.
 y ! what to thee ?—the Godhead, what !
 th awe !) though He should bid thee bleed ?
 blood, thy final hope is spilt ? 165
 anipotence reward the blow :
 reserve thy being ; disobey.
 disobedience. Know, Lorenzo !
 ie' Almighty's subsequent command,
 nmand is this :—' Man, love thyself.' 170
 e free agents are not free.
 s the basis, bliss the prize ;
 sts existence, 'tis a crime ;
 on of our law supreme ;
 le ; though nations, which consult 175
 at thy expense, resound applause.
 tue's recompense is doubtful here,
 wholly ; well may we demand
 suffer'd to be good, in vain ?
 ood in vain, is man enjoin'd ? 180

Why to be good in vain is man betray'd ?
 Betray'd by traitors lodged in his own breast,
 By sweet complacencies from virtue felt ?
 Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part ?

Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name 185
 Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,

Why Reason made accomplice in the cheat ?

Why are the wisest loudest in her praise ?

Can man by Reason's beam be led astray ?

Or, at his peril, imitate his God ? 190

Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,

Or both are true, or man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave ; or own, Lorenzo,

Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.

Dauntless thy spirit, cowards are thy scorn : 195

Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.

The man immortal, rationally brave,

Dares rush on death—because he cannot die !

But if man loses all when life is lost,

He lives a coward, or a fool expires. 200

A daring Infidel (and such there are,

From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,

Or pure heroical defect of thought)

Of all earth's madmen most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd 205

For valour, virtue, science, all we love,

And all we praise ; for worth, whose noontide beam,

Enabling us to think in higher style,

Mends our ideas of ethereal powers ;

Dream we, that lustre of the moral world 210

Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close ?

Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,

And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,

The Mind Almighty ? Could it be that Fate,

Just when the lineaments began to shine, 215

And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,

With night eternal blot it out, and give

The skies alarm, lest angels too might die ?

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137

human souls why not angelic too,
 wish'd ; and a solitary God, 220
 hastily ruin frowning from his throne ?
 we this moment gaze on God in man,
 next lose man for ever in the dust ?
 must we disengage, or man mistakes ;
 here, where least his judgment fears a flaw. 225
 in and worth how boldly he commends !
 in and worth are sacred names ; revered
 not embraced ; applauded ! deified !
 not compassion'd too ? if spirits die,
 ere calamities, inflicted both 230
 make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye
 for what ? to spy more miseries ;
 orth, so recompensed, new points their stings.
 n surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
 orth exalted humbles us the more. 235
 wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
 less and vice the refuge of mankind.
 s virtue, then, no joys ?—Yes, joys dear bought.
 e'er so long in this imperfect state,
 and vice are at eternal war. 240
 's a combat ; and who fights for nought,
 precarious, or for small reward ?
 Virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
 take degrees angelic here below,
 rtue, while they compliment, betray, 245
 ble motives and unfaithful guards.
 own, the' unfading crown, her soul inspires ;
 at and that alone can countervail
 dy's treacheries and the world's assaults.
 th's poor pay our famish'd virtue dies ; 250
 incontestable ! in spite of all
 le has preach'd, or a Voltaire believed.
 an the more we dive, the more we see
 's signet stamping an immortal make.
 the bottom of his soul, the base 255
 ng all, what find we ? knowledge, love !

As a mock diadem, in savage sport,
Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain from seeming ease
In future age lies no redress? and shut
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals
The worst to wallow, and the best to rise?
The man who merits most must most
Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love and know
Is boundless appetite and boundless power,
And these demonstrate boundless objects
Objects, powers, appetites, Heaven supplies
Nor, Nature through, e'er violates this
Eternal concord on her tuneful string.
Is man the sole exception from her law?
Eternity struck off from human hope,
(I speak with truth, but veneration to
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heaven,
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On Nature's beauteous aspect, and dark
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with his

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 139

'd, and ever full, and unimbitter'd 296
 doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs,
 d's peculiar ! Reason's precious dower !
 ign clime they ransack for their robes,
 thers cite to the litigious bar ;
 ood is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd ; 300
 nd a paradise in every field,
 ghs forbidden where no curses hang .
 l no more than strikes the sense, unstretch'd
 ious dread, or murmur in the rear :
 he worst comes, it comes unfear'd ; one stroke
 nd ends their woe : they die but once ; 306
 incommunicable privilege ! for which
 an, who rules the globe and reads the stars,
 her or hero, sighs in vain.
 unt for this prerogative in brutes. 310
 no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
 it beams on it from Eternity.
 nd sweet solution ! that unties
 icult, and softens the severe ;
 nd on Nature's beauteous face dispels ; 315
 bright order ; casts the brute beneath,
 thrones us in supremacy
 'en here. Admit immortal life,
 ue is knight-errantry no more ;
 ue brings in hand a golden dower, 320
 er in reversion : Hope exults,
 ugh much bitter in our cup is thrown,
 nates, and gives the taste of Heaven.
 efore is the Deity so kind ?
 ing beyond astonishment ! 325
 our reward—for heaven enjoy'd below.
 insubdued thy stubborn heart ?—for there
 tor lurks who doubts the truth I sing .
 is guiltless ; Will alone rebels.—
 ; that stubborn heart, if I should find 330
 expected witnesses against thee ?
 Pleasure, and the Love of Gain.

Canst thou suspect that these, which make the soul
The slave of earth, should own her heir of Heaven?
Canst thou suspect what makes us disbelieve 335
Our immortality should prove it sure?

First, then, Ambition summon to the bar.
Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,
And inextinguishable nature, speak :
Each much deposes ; hear them in their turn. 340

The soul, how passionately fond of fame !
How anxious that fond passion to conceal !
We blush, detected in designs on praise,
Though for best deeds, and from the best of men ;
And why? because immortal. Art divine 345
Has made the body tutor to the soul ;
Heaven kindly gives our blood a moral flow,
Bids it ascend the glewing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
Which stoops to court a character from man ; 350
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite outspeaks
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire
At high presumptions of their own desert, 355
One age is poor applause : the mighty shout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late Time must echo, worlds unborn resound.
We wish our names eternally to live ;
Wild dream ! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too. 361
Instinct points out an interest in hereafter,
But our blind reason sees not where it lies.
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of Immortality, 365
And in itself a shadow ; soon as caught
Contemn'd, it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.
Consult the' ambitious, 'tis Ambition's cure
'And is this all?' cried Cæsar, at his height,
Disgusted. This third proof Ambition brings

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141

mortality. The first in fame,
 to him near, your envy will abate :
 at the disproportion vast between
 vision and the purchase, he will sigh
 success, and blush at his renown. 375
 y ? because far richer prize invites
 rt ; far more illustrious glory calls ;
 in whispers, yet the deafest hear.
 an Ambition a fourth proof supply ?
 and stronger than the former three ; 384
 e o'erlook'd by some reputed wise.
 disappointments in ambition pain,
 ough success disgusts, yet still, Lorenzo !
 we str~~ing~~ to pluck it from our hearts,
 re planted for the noblest ends. 385
 the famed advice to Pyrrhus given,
 aised than ponder'd ; specious, but unsound :
 hat hero's sword the world had quell'd,
 ason his ambition. Man must soar ;
 nate activity within, 390
 ppressive spring, will toss him up
 of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,
 lager has his ambition too :
 n prouder than his fetter'd slave.
 uild their little Babylons of straw, 395
 e proud Assyrian in their hearts,
 —' Behold the wonders of my might !'
 y ? because immortal as their lord ;
 ls immortal must for ever heave
 thing great ; the glitter or the gold ; 400
 ise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven !
 bsolutely vain is human praise,
 uman is supported by divine.
 duce Lorenzo to himself ;
 and Pride (bad masters !) share our hearts. 405
 of pleasure is ordain'd to guard
 our bodies, and extend our race ;
 of praise is planted to protect

And propagate—the glories of the mind !
 What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
 Earth's happiness ? from that the delicate,
 The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,
 Want and convenience, under-workers, lay
 The basis on which love of glory builds.
 Nor is thy life, O Virtue ! less in debt
 To praise, thy secret stimulating friend.
 Were men not proud, what merit should we miss
 Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.
 Praise is the salt that seasons right to man,
 And whets his appetite for moral good.
 Thirst of applause is Virtue's second ~~board~~ ^{board},
 Reason her first ; but Reason wants an aid ;
 Our private Reason is a flatterer ;
 Thirst of applause calls public judgment in
 To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
 And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.

Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still.
 Why this so nice construction of our hearts ?

These delicate moralities of sense,
 This constitutional reserve of aid
 To succour Virtue when our Reason fails ;
 If Virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
 And oft the mark of injuries on earth,
 When labour'd to maturity (its bill
 Of disciplines and pains unpaid) must die ?
 Why freighted rich to dash against a rock ?
 Were man to perish when most fit to live,
 O how mispent were all these stratagems,
 By skill divine inwoven in our frame !

Where are, Heaven's holiness and mercy fled ?
 Laughs Heaven, at once, at virtue and at man ?
 If not, why that discouraged, this destroy'd ?—

Thus far Ambition : what says Avarice ?
This her chief maxim, which has long been this
'The wise and wealthy are the same'—I grant

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143

up treasure with incessant toil,
 man's province, this his highest praise :
 great end keen Instinct stings him on :
 that instinct, Reason ! is thy charge ; 450
 e to tell us where true treasure lies
 son, failing to discharge her trust,
 e deaf discharging it in vain,
 r follows ; and blind Industry,
 r the spur, but stranger to the course, 455
 rse wherè stakes of more than gold are won)
 ng with the cares of distant age
 d spirits of the present hour,
 for an eternity below.
 shalt not covet,' is a wise command, 460
 ded to the wealth the Sun surveys.
 ther, the command stands quite reversed,
 rice is a virtue most divine.
 a refuge for our happiness ?—
 e ; and is it not for reason too ? 465
 this world unriddles but the next.
 inextinguishable thirst of gain ?
 xtinguishable life in man :
 not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,
 ted wing to fly so far in guilt. 470
 pes, I grant, ambition, avarice ;
 their root is immortality :
 s wild growths, so bitter and so base,
 d reproach !) religion can reclaim.
 xalt, throw down their poisonous lee, 475
 e them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.
 e third witness laughs at bliss remote,
 ely promises an Eden here :
 e shall speak for once, though prone to lie,
 on cheat, and Pleasure is her name. 480
 ure never was Lorenzo deaf ;
 ar her now, now first thy real friend.
 Nature made us not more fond than proud
 ess, (whence hypocrites in joy !

Makers of mirth ! artificers of smiles !)

41

Why should the joy most poignant sense affords

Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride ?—

Those heaven-born blushes tell us man descends,

E'en in the zenith of his earthly bliss :

Should Reason take her infidel repose,

42

This honest instinct speaks our lineage high ;

This instinct calls on darkness to conceal

Our rapturous relation to the stalls.

Our glory covers us with noble shame,

And he that's unconfounded is unmann'd.

43

The man that blushes is not quite a brute.

Thus far with thee, Lorenzo ! will I close,—

Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made ;

But pleasure, full of glory as of joy ;

Pleasure, which neither blushes nor expires.

500

The witnesses are heard, the cause is o'er ;

Let Conscience file the sentence in her court :

Deeper than deeds that half a realm convey,

Thus, seal'd by Truth, the' authentic record runs.

' Know all ; know, Infidels,—unapt to know !

506

'Tis immortality your nature solves ;

'Tis immortality deciphers man,

And opens all the mysteries of his make .

Without it, half his instincts are a riddle ,

Without it, all his virtues are a dream :

510

His very crimes attest his dignity ;

His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,

Declares him born for blessings infinite.

What less than infinite makes unabsurd

Passions, which all on earth but more inflames ?

515

Fierce passions, so mismeasured to this scene,

Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,

Far, far beyond the worth of all below,

For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,

And evidence our title to the skies.'

524

Ye gentle theologues of calmer kind !

Whose constitution dictates to your pen,

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 arguments above, below, 975
 and within, the short result—
 immortal, there's a God in heaven !'
 before such redundancy ? such waste
 t ? one sets my soul at rest ;
 , and at hand, and, oh !—at heart. 980
 skies, Philander's life so pain'd,
 pure, that or succeeding scenes
 to give, or ne'er had he been born !
 old tale is this !' Lorenzo cries.—
 argument is old ; but truth 985
 pair ; and had not this been true,
 hadst despised it for its age
 mortal as thy soul, and fable
 s thy joys. Be wise, nor make
 ghest blessing vengeance. O be wise ! 990
 curse of immortality !
 'st thou what it is, or what thou art ?
 a the' importance of a soul immortal ?
 midnight glory : worlds on worlds !
 np ; redouble this amaze ! 995
 d add ; add twice ten thousand more ;
 the whole ; one soul outweighs them all,
 ' astonishing magnificence .
 ent creation poor.
 elieve not me : no man believe ; 1000
 words, but deeds ; and deeds no less
 of the Supreme, nor his a few .
 i all ; consulted, all proclaim
 apotanco. Tremble at thyself,
 mnipotence has waked so long ; 1005
 und work'd for ages ; from the birth
 this unbelieving hour.
 all province of his vast domain
 ow while I pronounce his name !)
 d done, and not for this sole end, 1010
 ills from death ? The soul's high price
 he conduct of the skies

The soul's high price is the Creation's key,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of every deed divine :
That is the chain of ages which maintains
Their obvious correspondents, and unites
Most distant periods in one bless'd design :
That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard
The natural, civil, or religious world ;
The former two, but servants to the third :
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown
And angels ask, ' Where once they shone so fair
To lift us from this abject, to sublime ;
This flux, to permanent ; this dark, to day ;
This foul, to pure ; this turbid, to serene ;
This mean, to mighty !—for this glorious end
The' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke !
The world was made, was ruin'd, was restored ;
Laws from the skies were publish'd, were repea
On earth kings, kingdoms, rose ; kings, kingdom
Famed sages lighted up the Pagan world ;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance
Through distant age ; saints travel'd, martyrs b
By wonders sacred Nature stood control'd ;
The living were translated ; dead were raised ;
Angels, and more than angels, came from Heav
And, oh ! for this descended lower still :
Gilt was Hell's gloom ; astonish'd at his guest,
For one short moment Lucifer adored.
Lorenzo ! and wilt thou do less ?—For this
That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspired,
Of all these truths, thrice-venerable code !
Deists ! perform your quarantine ; and then
Fall prostrate, ere you touch it, lest you die.
Nor less intensely bent infernal powers
To mar, than those of light, this end to gain.
O what a scene is here !—Lorenzo ! wake !

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

159

the thought ; exert, expand thy soul
 e the vast idea ; it denies
 e the name of great. Two warring worlds,
 rope against Afric ! warring worlds,
 e than mortal, mounted on the wing ! 1055
 ent wings of energy and zeal,
 overing o'er this little brand of strife,
 blunary ball.—But strife, for what ?
 r own cause conflicting ! no ; in thine,
 's. His single interest blows the flame ; 1060
 sole stake ; his fate the trumpet sounds
 kindles war immortal. How it burns !
 tuous swarms of deities in arms ;
 force opposing, till the waves run high,
 mpest Nature's universal sphere, 1065
 pposites eternal, steadfast, stern,
 es implacable are good and ill ;
 a, vain man, would mediate peace between them.
 k not this fiction : ' There was war in heaven.'
 eaven's high crystal mountain, where it hung,
 lmighty's outstretch'd arm took down his bow,
 ot his indignation at the deep :
 der'd Hell, and darted all her fires.—
 ems the stake of little moment still !
 umbers man, who singly caused the storm ? 1075
 eps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries ?
 extest, thou. How dreadful to reflect
 urdour, care, and counsel mortals cause
 ats divine ! how little in their own !
 re'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me !
 apply this wondrous view supports 1081
 mer argument ! how strongly strikes
 tal life's full demonstration here !
 his exertion ? why this strange regard
 Heaven's Omnipotent indulged to man ?— 1085
 se in man the glorious, dreadful power,
 rely to be pain'd, or bless'd for ever.
 on gives importance, swells the price,

An angel, if a creature of a day,
 What would he be ? a trifle of no weight ; 1090
 Or stand or fall, no matter which, he's gone.
 Because immortal, therefore is indulged
 This strange regard of deities to dust.
 Hence Heaven looks down on earth with all her eyes ;
 Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight ; 1095
 Hence, every soul has partisans above,
 And every thought a critic in the skies :
 Hence clay, vile clay ! has angels for its guard,
 And every guard a passion for his charge :
 Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine 1100
 Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid
 Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
 And Providence came forth to meet mankind :
 In various modes of emphasis and awe 1105
 He spoke his will, and trembling Nature heard
 He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm :
 Witness thou, Sinai ! whose cloud-cover'd height,
 And shaken basis, own'd the present God :
 Witness, ye billows ! whose returning tide, 1110
 Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
 Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell.
 Witness, ye flames ! the' Assyrian tyrant blew
 To sevenfold rage, as impotent as strong :
 And thou, Earth ! witness, whose expanding jaws 1115
 Closed o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons :*
 Has not each element, in turn, subscribed
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise ?
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
 To strike this truth through adamant man ? 1120
 If not all adamant, Lorenzo ! hear ;
 All is delusion ; Nature is wrapp'd up
 In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye :
 There's no consistence, meaning, plan or end.
 In all beneath the sun, in all above, 1125

* Korah, &c.

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man can penetrate) or heaven
ense, inestimable prize ;
othing, or that prize is all.—
each toy be still a match for heaven,
quivalent for groans below ? 1130
ld not give a trifle to prevent
ould give a thousand worlds to cure ?
! thou hast seen (if thine to see)
e, and her God, (by Nature's course,
e's course control'd) declare for me. 1135
above proclaim ' immortal man !'
immortal !' all below resounds.
's a system of theology,
ie greatest strangers to the schools ;
learn'd ; and sages o'er a plough. 1140
enzo ! then, imposed on thee
alternative, or to renounce
and thy sense, or to believe ?
is unbelief ? 'tis an exploit,
is enterprise ; to gain it, man 1145
through every bar of common sense,
a shame, magnanimously wrong ;
rewards the sturdy combatant ?—
repentance ; infamy, his crown.
efore infamy !—for want of faith 1150
steep precipices of wrong he slides ;
thing to support him in the right.
e future wanting is, at least
every weakness, every guilt,
temptation ripens it to birth. 1155
e's gain invites him to the deed,
is country sold, his father slain ?
to pursue our good supreme,
preme, his only good, is here !
avarice, by the wise disdain'd, 1160
wisdom while mankind are fools,
a turf or tombstone covers all :
employment, and provide for sense.

A richer pasture, and a larger range ;
And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne. 1165
When Virtue's prize and prospect are no more,
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
Would Heaven quite beggar Virtue, if beloved ?

'Has Virtue charms?'—I grant her heavenly fair ;
But if unportion'd, all will Interest wed, 1170

Though that our admiration, this our choice.

The virtues grow on Immortality ;

That root destroy'd they wither and expire.

A Deity believed will nought avail ;

Rewards and punishments make God adored, 1175

And hopes and fears give Conscience all her power.

As in the dying parent dies the child,

Virtue with Immortality expires.

Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,

Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave. 1180

His duty 'tis to love himself alone,

Nor care though mankind perish if he smiles.

Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die

Is dead already ; nought but brute survives.

And are there such ? Such candidates there are
For more than death ; for utter loss of being ; 1186
Being, the basis of the Deity !

Ask you the cause ?—the cause they will not tell ;

Nor need they. Oh, the sorceries of sense !

They work this transformation on the soul, 1190

Dismount her like the serpent at the fall,

Dismount her from her native wing (which soar'd

Erewhile ethereal heights,) and throw her down

To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you ? O ye Fallen ! 1195

Fallen from the wings of reason and of hope !

Erect in stature, prone in appetite !

Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain !

Lovers of argument, averse to sense !

Boasters of liberty ! fast bound in chains ! 1200

Lords of the wide creation, and the shame !

senseless than the' irrationals you scorn !
 base than those you rule ! than those you pity
 ore undone ! O ye most infamous
 ngs, from superior dignity ! 1205
 st in woe, from means of boundless bliss !
 sed by blessings infinite ! because
 ighly favour'd, most profoundly lost !
 tley mass of contradiction strong !
 e you, too, convinced your souls fly off 1210
 alation soft, and die in air,
 he full flood of evidence against you ?
 coarse drudgeries and sinks of sense,
 ouls have quite worn out the make of Heaven,
 e new cast, and creatures of your own ; 1215
 ough you can deform, you can't destroy :
 se, not uncreate, is all your power.
 nzo ! this black brotherhood renounce ;
 ice St. Evremond, and read St. Paul,
 p'd by miracle, by reason wing'd, 1220
 untling mind made long abode in Heaven.
 freethinking, unconfined to parts,
 d the soul, on curious travel bent,
 h all the provinces of human thought ;
 : her flight through the whole sphere of man ;
 vast universe to make the tour ; 1226
 : recess of space and time at home,
 r with their wonders ; diving deep ;
 ke a prince of boundless interests there,
 ost ambitious of the most remote ; 1230
 : on truth unbroken and entire ;
 n the system, the full orb ; where truths
 hs enlighten'd and sustain'd, afford
 hlike strong foundation, to support
 .cumbent weight of absolute complete 1235
 tion : here, the more we press, we stand
 rm : who most examine, most believe.
 ike half-sentences, confound ; the whole
 s the *sense*, and God is understood ;

Who not in fragments writes to human race : 1240

Read his whole volume, sceptic ! then reply.

This, this is thinking free, a thought that grasps

Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.

Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene ;

What are earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs, 1245

Of human souls, one day, the destined range ?

And what yon boundless orbs to godlike man ?

Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,

And ask more space in Heaven, can roll at large

In man's capacious thought, and still leave room 1250

For ampler orbs, for new creations there.

Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe

A point of no dimension, of no weight ?

It can ; it does : the world is such a point ;

And of that point how small a part enslaves ! 1255

How small a part—of nothing, shalt I say ?

Why not ?—Friends, our chief treasure, how they drop !

Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone !

The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has oped

A triple mouth, and in an awful voice 1260

Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.

How the world falls to pieces round about us,

And leaves us in a ruin of our joy !

What says this transportation of my friends ?

It bids me love the place where now they dwell, 1265

And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.

Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee ;

There, there, Lorenzo ! thy Clarissa sails.

Give thy mind sea-room ; keep it wide of earth,

That rock of souls immortal ; cut thy cord ; 1270

Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call every wind :

Eye thy great Pole-star ; make the land of Life !

Two kinds of life has double-natured man,

And two of death ; the last far more severe.

Life animal is nurtured by the Sun, 1275

Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams :

Life rational subsists on higher food,

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nt in His beams who made the day :
leave that Sun, and are left by this
of all who die in stubborn guilt,) 1280
darkness ; strictly double death.
y no judicial stroke of Heaven,
s course ; as sure as plummets fall.
or man must alter ere they meet,
t and darkness blend not in our sphere) 1285
ast, Lorenzo, who must change.
that double death should prove thy lot,
the bowels of the Deity ;
be bless'd, as far as man permits
lone, all rationals Heaven arms 1290
lustrious, but tremendous power,
act its own most gracious ends,
strict necessity, not choice ;
r denied, men, angels, were no more
e engines, void of praise or blame. 1295
ational implies the power
ess'd or wretched, as we please ;
eason would have nought to do,
t would be barr'd capacity
urts incapacity of bliss. 1300
lls our happiness, allows our doom ;
ardently, but not compels ;
t persuades, almighty man decrees.
maker of immortal fates.
y man, if finally he falls ; 1305
must, who learns from death alone
ul secret,—that he lives for ever.
to thee ?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
ife ? but wherefore doubtful still ?
is Nature's ardent wish ; 1310
tly we wish we soon believe :
faith declares that wish destroy'd :
estroy'd it ?—shall I tell thee what ?
d the future, 'tis no longer wish'd ;
nwish'd, we strive to disbelieve. 1315

' Thus Infidelity our guilt betrays.'
 Nor that the sole detection ! Blush, Lorenzo !
 Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.
 The future fear'd ?—An infidel, and fear ?
 Fear what ? a dream ? a fable ?—How thy dread, 1320
 Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong,
 Affords my cause an undesign'd support !
 How Disbelief affirms what it denies !
 ' It, unawares, asserts immortal life.'—
 Surprising ! Infidelity turns out 1325
 A creed and a confession of our sins :
 Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.

Lorenzo ! with Lorenzo clash no more,
 Nor longer a transparent vizard wear.
 Think'st thou Religion only has her mask ? 1330
 Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
 Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.
 When visited by thought (thought will intrude,)
 Like him they serve, they tremble and believe.
 Is there hypocrisy so foul as this ? 1335
 So fatal to the welfare of the world ?
 What detestation, what contempt, their due !
 And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape,
 That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.
 If not for that asylum, they might find 1340
 A hell on earth, nor scape a worse below.

With insolence and impotence of thought,
 Instead of racking fancy to refute,
 Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—
 But shall I dare confess the dire result ? 1345
 Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand ?
 From purer manners to sublimer faith,
 Is Nature's unavoidable ascent.
 An honest Deist, where the Gospel shines,
 Matured to nobler, in the Christian ends. 1350
 When that bless'd change arrives, e'en cast aside
 This song superfluous : life immortal strikes
 Conviction in a flood of light divine.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

167

ian dwells, like Uriel,* in the Sun ;
 evidence puts doubt to flight, 1355
 ent hope anticipates the skies,
 ight Sun, Lorenzo ! scale the sphere :
 ; it invites thee ; it descends
 avenge, to woo and waft thee whence it came.
 I revere the sacred page, a page 1360
 triumphs immortality ; a page
 ot the whole Creation could produce ;
 ot the Conflagration shall destroy :
 ted in the mind of gods for ever,
 e's ruins not one letter lost. 1365
 nd disdain of what e'en gods adore,
 le ?—Poor wretch ! thy guardian angel weeps.
 nd men assent to what I sing ;
 le, and thank me for my midnight dream.
 ious hearts fume frenzy to the brain ! 1370
 sh us on to pride, and pride to shame :
 delity is Wit's cockade,
 the brazen brow that braves the skies,
 of being dreadfully secure.
 ! if thy doctrine wins the day, 1375
 es my dreams, defeated, from the field ;
 all, if earth a final scene,
 ed : stand fast ; be sure to be a knave ;
 in grain ! no'er deviate to the right.
 thou be good—how infinite thy loss ! 1380
 ly makes annihilation gain.
 cheme ! which life deprives of comfort, death
 and which vice only recommends.
 ere, Infidels ! your bates thrown out
 weak converts ? where your lofty boast 1385
 or virtue, and of love to man ?
 tion ! I confess in these.
 can reclaim you ? dare I hope profound
 hers the converts of a song ?

* Milton's Paradise Lost.

Yet know its title* flatters you, not me ; 1390
 Yours be the praise to make my title good ;
 Mine to bless Heaven, and triumph in your praise.
 But since so pestilential your disease,
 Though sovereign is the medicine I prescribe,
 As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair, 1395
 But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake
 Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise :
 For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,
 E'er wish (and wish in vain !) that souls could die ?
 What ne'er can die, oh ! grant to live, and crown 1400
 The wish, and aim, and labour of the skies ;
 Increase, and enter on the joys of Heaven :
 Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,
 Receive an imprimatur from above,
 While angels shout—an Infidel Reclaim'd ! 1405
 To close, Lorenzo ! spite of all my pains,
 Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever ?
 Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all ?
 This is a miracle, and that no more.
 Who gave beginning can exclude an end. 1410
 Deny thou art ; then doubt if thou shalt be.
 A miracle with miracles enclosed
 Is man ! and starts his faith at what is strange ?
 What less than wonders from the wonderful ?
 What less than miracles from God can flow ? 1415
 Admit a God—that mystery supreme !
 That cause uncaused ! all other wonders cease :
 Nothing is marvellous for him to do :
 Deny him—all is mystery besides ;
 Millions of mysteries ! each darker far 1420
 That that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.
 If weak thy faith, why choose the harder side ?
 We nothing know but what is marvellous ;
 Yet what is marvellous we can't believe.
 So weak our reason, and so great our God, 1425

* The Infidel Reclaimed.

most surprises in the sacred page,
strange, or stranger, must be true.
not reason's labour, but repose.
And virtue why so backward, man?
ice;—the present strongly strikes us all; 1430
re, faintly: can we, then, be men?
orenzo! the reverse is right.
man's peculiar; sense the brute's.
ent is the scanty realm of Sense;
e, Reason's empire unconfined: 1435
xpending all her godlike power,
, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there:
lds her blessings! there expects her praise;
ing asks of Fortune or of men.
is Reason? be she thus defined; 1440
upright stature in the soul.
man,—and strive to be a god.
hat?" (thou say'st) to damp the joys of life?
ve heart and substance to thy joys.
nt, Hope, mark how she domineers; 1445
is quit realities for dreams,
d peace for hazard and alarm.
nt o'er the tyrants of the soul,
Ambition quit its taken prize,
luxuriant branch on which it sits, 1450
earing crowns, to spring at distant game,
ge in toils and dangers—for repose.
ecarious, and of things, when gain'd,
moment and as little stay,
ten toils and dangers into joys; 1455
n that hope which nothing can defeat,
unask'd? rich hope of boundless bliss!
man's power to paint it, Time's to close!
pe is earth's most estimable prize;
an's portion, while no more than man: 1460
all passions, most befriends us here;
f prouder name befriends us less.
r tears, and transport has her death:

Hope, like a cordial, innocent though strong,
Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes, 1465
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys :

'Tis all our present state can safely bear,
Health to the frame ! and vigour to the mind !
A joy attemper'd ! a chastised delight !
Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet ! 1470
'Tis man's full cup, his paradise below !

A bless'd hereafter, then, or hoped or gain'd,
Is all,—our whole of happiness ! full proof
I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye foes to song ! (well meaning men, 1475
Though quite forgotten* half your Bible's praise !)
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please :
Grave minds you praise, nor can you praise too much
If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave listen,—and be graver still. 1480

* The poetic parts of it.

NIGHT VIII.

Virtue's Apology :

OR,

THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED,

THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION AND
PLEASURE, WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM,
OF THE WORLD.

And has all Nature, then, espoused my part?
Have I bribed Heaven and Earth to plead against thee?
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains?
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal bless'd.
Unbless'd immortals!—what can shock us more? 5
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There stows his treasure; thence his title draws,
Man of the world! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was, 10
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age
When men were men, and not ashamed of Heaven,—
Fired their ambition, as it crown'd their joy!
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
Fain would I rebaptize thee, and confer 15
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflamed,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song.
To thee the world how fair! how strongly strikes
Ambition! and gay Pleasure stronger still! 20
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt, that lays
Thy virtue dead; be these my triple theme;
Nor shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.

Common the theme; not so the song, if she

And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine!
This world! and this, unrival'd by the skies!
A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
Three demons that divide its realms between them, 55
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart; their sport, their flying ball;
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tired,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above
That glorious promise angels were esteem'd

n to bring ; a promise their Adored
 ed to communicate, and press,
 el, miracle, life, death, on man.
 he world Lorenzo's wisdom woos, 65
 ts thorny pillow seeks repose ;
 which, like opiates ill prepared,
 es, but not composes ; fills
 nary mind with gay chimeras,
 ild trash of sleep, without the rest : 70
 feign'd travel, and what dreams of joy !
 rail men, things ! how momentary, both !
 chase, of shadows hunting shades !
 the busy, equal, though unlike ;
 wisdom, differently wise ! 75
 flowery meadows, and through dreary wastes,
 ling, and one dancing, into death.
 ot a day but, to the man of thought,
 some secret that throws new reproach
 nd makes him sick of seeing more. 80
 es of business tell us—' What are men ;'
 es of pleasure—' What is all beside :'
 hers we despise ; and here ourselves.
 gust eternal dwells delight ?—
 obation strikes the string of joy. 85
 wondrous prize has kindled this career,
 th the din, and chokes us with the dust,
 s gay stage, one inch above the grave ?
 d run up and down in quest of eyes ;
 ual, in pursuit of something worse ; 90
 e, of gold ; the politic, of power ;
 of other butterflies as vain !
 s draw things frivolous and light,
 an's heart by vanity drawn in !
 wift circle of returning toys 95
 strawlike, round and round, and then ingulf'd,
 ay delusion darkens to despair !
 s a beaten track.'—Is this a track
 t be beaten ? never beat enough,

Till enough learn'd the truth it would inspire. 10

Shall Truth be silent because Folly frowns ?

Turn the world's history, what find we there

But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel claims,

Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,

And endless inhumanities on man ? 10

Fame's trumpet seldom sounds but, like the knell,

It brings bad tidings : how it hourly blows

Man's misadventures round the listening world !

Man is the tale of narrative old Time :

Sad tale ! Which high as Paradise begins ; 11

As if, the toil of travel to delude,

From stage to stage, in his eternal round,

The Days, his daughters, as they spin our hours

On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought

Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread, 11

Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells

With, now and then, a wretched farce between,

And fills his chronicle with human woe.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us

Not one but puts some cheat on all mankind. 12

While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,

They flatter our fond hopes, and promise much

Of amiable, but hold him not o'er-wise

Who dares to trust them, and laugh round the year,

At still confiding, still confounded, man, 12

Confiding though confounded ; hoping on,

Untaught by trial, unconvinced by proof,

And ever looking for the never seen.

Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies,

Nor owns itself a cheat till it expires : 13

Its little joys go out by one and one,

And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night,

Night darker than what now involves the pole.

O Thou, who dost permit these ills to fall

For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn

O Thou, whose hands this goodly fabric framed, 14

Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know

this sublunary world? a vapour;
 all it holds; itself, a vapour;
 damp bed of Chaos, by the beam
 ordain'd to swim its destined hour
 at air, then melt and disappear.
 days are number'd, nor remote her doom;
 I, though less transient, than her sons;
 dote on her, as the world and they 145
 eternal, solid; Thou a dream.
 Iote, on what? immortal views apart,
 of outsides! a land of shadows!
 field of flowery promises!
 cess of joys! perplex'd with doubts, 150
 p with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread
 l adventurers, their all on board;
 d hope, if here their fortune frowns;
 on it must. Of various rates they sail,
 is various; all alike in this, 155
 ss, anxious, toss'd with hopes and fears
 t skies; obnoxious all to storm,
 ny the most general blast of life:
 for Happiness; yet few provide
 t of Knowledge, pointing where it lies.
 's helm, to shape the course design'd
 or less, capricious Fate lament,
 d by the tide, and now resorb'd,
 er from their wishes than before:
 or less, against each other dash, 165
 d hurt, by gusts of passion driven,
 ring more from folly than from fate.
 thou dreadful and tumultuous home
 rs, at eternal war with man!
 apital, where most he domineers 170
 his chosen terrors frowning round.
 lately feasted high at Albion's cost*)
 ming, and loud roaring still for more!
 ful mirror! how dost thou reflect

* Admiral Balchen, &c

The melancholy face of human life !

175

The strong resemblance tempts me farther still :

And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck

By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,

Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienced, high in hope, 180

When young, with sanguine cheer and streamers gay,

We cut our cable, launch into the world,

And fondly dream each wind and star our friend ;

All in some darling enterprise embark'd :

But where is he can fathom its event ? 185

Amid a multitude of artless hands,

Ruin's sure perquisite ! her lawful prize !

Some steer aright, but the black blast blows hard,

And puffs them wide of Hope : with hearts of proof,

Full against wind and tide, some win their way, 190

And when strong Effort has deserved the port,

And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won ! 'tis lost !

Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate :

They strike ! and, while they triumph, they expire.

In stress of weather most, some sink outright ; 195

O'er them and o'er their names the billows close ;

To-morrow knows not they were ever born.

Others a short memorial leave behind,

Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulf'd ;

It floats a moment, and is seen no more. 200

One Cæsar lives ; a thousand are forgot.

How few, beneath auspicious planets born,

(Darlings of Providence ! fond Fate's elect !)

With swelling sails make good the promised port,

With all their wishes freighted ! yet e'en these, 205

Freighted with all their wishes, soon complain ;

Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,

They still are men ; and when is man secure ?

As fatal time, as storm ! the rush of years

Beats down their strength ; their numberless escapes

In ruin end. And now their proud success 21

pain to quit the world, just made their own,
 nest so deeply down'd, and built so high !
 Now they build who build beneath the stars. 215
 Then apart (if woe apart can be
 mortal man,) and Fortune at our nod,
 Say ! rich ! great ! triumphant ! and august !
 are they ?—The most happy (strange to say)
 are the most of human misery. 220
 are they ? smiling wretches of to-morrow !
 wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be,
 treacherous blessings, at the day of need,
 their faithless friends, unmask and sting :
 what provoking indigence in wealth ! 225
 aggravated impotence in power !
 titles, then, what insult of their pain !
 sole anchor, equal to the waves,
 that Hope ! defies not the rude storm,
 comfort from the foaming billow's rage, 230
 makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.
 is a sketch of what thy soul admires ?—
 are (thou sayest) the miseries of life
 addled in a group : a more distinct
 , perhaps, might bring thee better news.' 235
 in life's stages ; they speak plainer still ;
 sadder they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.
 in thy lovely boy ; in him behold
 that that can befall the best on earth ;
 thy has virtue by his mother's side : 240
 Florello look : a father's heart
 or, though the man's is made of stone ;
 with, through such a medium seen, may make
 passion deep, and fondness prove thy friend.
 Flo ! lately cast on this rude coast 245
 less infant, now a heedless child.
 : Clarissa's throes thy care succeeds ;
 all of love, and yet severe as hate !
 thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns
 austerities his will restrain, 250

As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.

As yet, his Reason cannot go alone,

But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.

His little heart is often terrified ;

The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale ; 255

Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,

His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.

Ah ! what avails his innocence ? the task

Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers !

He learns to sigh, ere he is known to sin ; 260

Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !

How cruel this ! more cruel to forbear.

Our nature such, with necessary pains

We purchase prospects of precarious peace :

Though not a father, this might steal a sigh. 265

Suppose him disciplined aright (if not,

'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still,)

Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,

He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world ;

The world is taken, after ten years' toil, 270

Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.

Alas ! the world's a tutor more severe,

Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains ;

Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,

Or books (fair Virtue's advocates) inspired. 275

For who receives him into public life ?

Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,

Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere

(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight,)

And in their hospitable arms enclose ; 280

Men who think nought so strong as the romance,

So rank knight-errant, as a real friend ;

Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,

All weakness of affection quite subdued ;

Men that would blush at being thought sincere, 285

And feign, for glory, the few faults they want ;

That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,

As if, to them. Vice shown her own reward.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

179

canst thou bear a shocking sight ?
orello's sake, 'twill now appear. 290
l'd files of season'd veterans,
e world, in burnish'd falsehood bright ;
fatal stratagems of peace,
ation, in the throng, rubb'd off ;
in purpose in politeness sheath'd ; 295
eternal—during interest ;
lacable—when worth their while ;
every welfare but their own ;
Lucifer, and half as good ;
m none, but Lucifer, can gain— 300
gh these, (so common Fate ordains).
art, his cruel course he runs,
f all most amiable in life,
h, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd ;
his species wide diffused, 305
aptions to mankind's renown,
ust, and confidence of love,
ims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
m many a sigh, till time and pains,
ow mistress of this school, Experience, 310
istant, pausing, pale Distrust,
dear-bought clew to lead his youth
rpentine obliquities of life,
k labyrinth of human hearts.
if the clew shall come so cheap. 315
e learn to fence with public guilt,
feel its foul contagion too,
heavenly virtue is our guard,
nge kind of cursed necessity
n the sterling temper of his soul, 320
oy, to bear the current stamp,
i Wisdom ; sinks him into safety,
him into credit with the world,
ious titles dignify disgrace,
s injuries are arts of life ; 325
ter Reason prompts to bolder crimes.

And heavenly talents make infernal hearts,
That unsurmountable extreme of guilt !

Poor Machiavel ! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot that Genius need not go to school ; 330
Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,
His plan had practised long before 'twas writ.
The world's all title-page ; there's no contents.
The world's all face : the man who shows his heart
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd. 335

A man I knew, who lived upon a smile,
And well it fed him ; he lock'd plump and fair,
While rankest venom foam'd through every vein.
(Lorenzo ! what I tell thee take not ill ;)
Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive ; 340
And, dying, cursed the friend on whom he lived.
To such proficients thou art half a saint !
In foreign realms (for thou hast travel'd far)
How curious to contemplate two state rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice, 345
With all the necromantics of their art,
Playing the game of faces on each other,
Making court sweetmeats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust ;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceived, 350
And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone !
Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame.
Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool ;
And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve ? 355
For who can thank the man he cannot see ?

Why so much cover ? it defeats itself.

Ye that know all things ! know ye not men's hearts
Are therefore known, because they are conceal'd ?
For why conceal'd ?—the cause they need not tell. 360
I give him joy that's awkward at a lie ;

*Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe ;
His incapacity is his renown.*

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

181

or spirit, or it proves our strength. 365

'Tis needful ! is it therefore right ?—

grant it some small sign of grace

to an excuse : and wouldst thou, then,

cruel need ? thou mayst with ease ;

most needful that demands a knave. 370

our civil helm was shifting hands,

thought : think better if you can.

How rare ! the public path of life

yet allow that dirt its due,

the noble mind more noble still. 375

is no neuter ; it will wound or save ;

quench, or indignation fire.

The world, well known, will make a man.—

well known, will give our hearts to Heaven,

and demons, long before we die. 380

How fair the world, thy mistress, shines,

to part ; sure it's attend the choice ;

though not equal, detriment ensues.

Her self is deified on earth ;

her relapses, conflicts, foes ; 385

never fail to make her feel their hate.

her peculiar set of pains.

As to virtue, last and least complain ;

sigh, can others hope to smile ?

Has her miseries to mourn, 390

or Folly lead a happy life ?

suffer, what has earth to boast,

most happy who the least laments ?

Oh, much patience, the most envied state,

forgiveness, needs, the best of friends ? 395

or happy life, who looks not higher,

shall he find the shadow here.

Her sworn advocate, without a fee,

partly, with a smile, replies :

My song is right, and all must own 400

her peculiar set of pains :—

Whom Vice denies ?

If vice it is with Nature to comply :
 If pride and sense are so predominant,
 To check, not overcome them, makes a saint, 405
 Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
 Pleasure and glory the chief good of man ?

Can Pride and Sensuality rejoice ?

From purity of thought all pleasure springs,
 And from an humble spirit all our peace. 410
 Ambition, Pleasure ! let us talk of these ;
 Of these the Porch and Academy talk'd ;
 Of these each following age had much to say,
 Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.

Who talks of these, to mankind all at once 415
 He talks ; for where the saint from either free ?
 Are these thy refuge ?—No ; those rush upon thee,
 Thy vitals seize, and, vulture like, devour :
 I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
 Prometheus ! from this barren ball of earth, 420
 If Reason can unchain thee, thou art free.

And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls ;
 Mountain of torments ! eminence of woes !
 Of courted woes ! and courted through mistake !
 'Tis not ambition charms thee ; 'tis a cheat 425
 Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.
 Dost grasp at greatness ? first know what it is.
 Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies ?
 Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
 By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng ; 430
 Is glory lodged : 'tis lodged in the reverse ;
 Is that which joins, in that which equals all,
 The monarch and his slave,—' a deathless soul,
 Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
 A Father God, and brothers in the skies ;' 435
 Elder, indeed ; in time, but less remote
 In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man.
 Why greater what can fall than what can rise ?

If still delirious, now, Lorenzo ! go,
 And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world, 440

scorn around thee ; cast it on thy slaves,
 ives and equals. How scorn cast on them
 ds on thee ! If man is mean, as man,
 u a god ? if Fortune makes him so,
 the consequence : a maxim that 445
 draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
 in the drapery, the man is lost ;
 ils fluttering, and the soul forgot.
 eatest glory, when disposed to boast,
 hat aloud in which thy servants share. 450
 wisely strip the steed we mean to buy.
 ve, in their comparisons, of men ?
 ht avails thee where, but what, thou art.
 distinctions of this little life
 te cutaneous, foreign to the man. 455
 through Death's straits Earth's subtle serpents
 ercep,
 wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
 ked Satan the forbidden tree,
 ave their party-colour'd robe behind,
 now glitters, while they rear aloft 460
 razed crests, and hiss at us below.
 une's fucus strip them, yet alive,
 em of body too ; nay, closer still,
 ith all but moral in their minds,
 what then remains impose their name, 465
 ice them weak or worthy, great or mean.
 an that snuff of glory Fortune lights,
 ath puts out ! Dost thou demand a test,
 it once, infallible and short,
 greatness ? that man greatly lives, 470
 or his fate or fame, who greatly dies ;
 ish'd with hope where heroes shall despair.
 true criterion, many courts,
 us, might afford but few grandees.
 Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys
 greater than an honest, humble heart ; 475
 le heart, his residence ! pronounced.

His second seat, and rival to the skies.

The private path, the secret acts of men,

If noble, far the noblest of our lives !

480

How far above Lorenzo's glory sits

The' illustrious master of a name unknown ?

Whose worth, unrival'd and unwitness'd, loves

Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men,

And peace, beyond the world's conceptions, smiles ;

As thou (now dark) before we part shalt see.

486

But thy great soul this skulking glory scorns :

Lorenzo's sick but when Lorenzo's seen,

And when he shrugs at public business lies.

Denied the public eye, the public voice,

490

As if he lived on others' breath, he dies.

Fain would he make the world his pedestal,

Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.

Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,

And mix as much detraction as they can ?

495

Knows he, that faithless Fame her whisper has,

As well as trumpet ? that his vanity

Is so much tickled, from not hearing all ?

Knows this all knower, that from itch of praise,

Or from an itch more sordid, when he shines,

500

Taking his country by five hundred ears,

Sedates at once admire him and despise,

With modest laughter lining loud applause,

Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame ?

His fame which (like the mighty Cæsar) crown'd

505

With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,

By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.

We rise in glory as we sink in pride :

Where boasting ends, there dignity begins ;

And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake,

510

The blind Lorenzo's proud—of being proud,

And dreams himself ascending, in his fall.

An eminence, though fancied, turns the brain ;
All vice wants halcyon : but of all vice

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

85

e, unlike all other vice, it flies,
 the point in fancy most pursued.
 ert applause oblige the world in this ;
 ratify man's passion to refuse.
 r honour, when assumed, is lost : 520
 od men turn banditti, and rejoice,
 ouli-Kan, in plunder of the proud.
 gh somewhat disconcerted, steady still
 world's cause ; with half a face of joy,
 cries,—' Be, then, Ambition cast : 525
 n's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,
 easure ! proud Ambition is her slave ;
 he soars at great, and hazards ill ;
 he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes, 529
 ves his way, with crowns, to reach her smile.
 n resist her charms ?—Or should ? Lorenzo !
 mortal shall resist where angels yield ?
 e's the mistress of ethereal powers ;
 contend the rival gods above ;
 e's the mistress of the world below, 535
 ll it is for man that Pleasure charms,
 ould all stagnate but for Pleasure's ray !
 ould the frozen stream of action cease !
 the pulse of this so busy world ?
 e of pleasure : that, through every vein, 540
 motion, warmth, and shuts out death from life.
 gh various are the tempers of mankind,
 e's gay family holds all in chains.
 oost affect the black, and some the fair ;
 onest pleasure court, and some obscene. 545
 es obscene are various, as the throng
 ions that can err in human hearts.
 their objects, or transgress their bounds.
 ou there's but one whoredom ? whoredom
 en our reason licenses delight.
 uth, Lorenzo ?—thou shalt doubt no more.
 er chides thy gallantries, yet hugs
 common harlot in the dark,

A rank adulterer with others' gold ;
 And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner charms 550
 Hatred her brother has, as well as Love,
 Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.
 Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark :
 For her the black assassin draws his sword ;
 For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp, 560
 To which no single sacrifice may fall ;
 For her the saint abstains, the miser starves ;
 The stoic proud, for Pleasure, pleasure scorn'd ;
 For her Affliction's daughters grief indulge,
 And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ; 565
 For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy,
 And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death :
 Thus universal her despotic power !

And as her empire wide, her praise is just.
 Patron of Pleasure ! Doter on delight ! 570
 I am thy rival ; pleasure I profess ;
 Pleasure the purpose of my gl'comy song.
 Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name ;
 I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low :
 Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower ; 575
 And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence.
 If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.
 How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,
 And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise 580
 Of pleasure, to mankind unpraised, too dear !
 Ye modern stoics ! hear my soft reply ;
 Their senses men will trust : we can't impose,
 Or, if we could, is imposition right ?
 Own honey sweet ; but, owning, add this sting, 585
 ' When mix'd with poison it is deadly too.'
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.
 Is nought but virtue to be praised as good ?
 Why then is health preferr'd before disease ?

, though not from virtue, should prevail :
 n to life, and gratitude to Heaven.
 d our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd !
 s of pleasure is man's eldest born, 596
 his cradle, living to his tomb ;
 , her younger sister, though more grave,
 ant to minister, and not to mar,
 , Pleasure, queen of human hearts.
 zo ! thou, her majesty's renown'd, 600
 uncoif'd counsel, learned in the world !
 nk'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
 ok on me : yet, my Demosthenes !
 ou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I ?
 thou her nature, purpose, parentage ? 606
 ny song, and thou shalt know them all ;
 w thyself ; and know thyself to be
 : truth !) the most abstemious man alive.
 Calista, she will laugh thee dead,
 thee to her hermitage with L——. 610
 presumption ! thou, who never knew'st
 s thought ! shalt thou dare dream of joy ?
 e'er found a happy life by chance,
 i'd it into being with a wish :
 a snout of grovelling Appetite 615
 slt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
 t is, and must be learn'd ; and learn'd
 remitting effort, or be lost,
 res us perfect blockheads in our bliss.
 ids may drop down titles and estates ; 620
 may seek us ; but Wisdom must be sought ;
 before all ; but (how unlike all else
 : on earth !) 'tis never sought in vain. [see :
 Pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur,
 forth by Wisdom, nursed by Discipline, 625
 once taught, by Perseverance crown'd,
 s her head majestic ; round her throne,
 n the bosom of the just,
 e, listed, forms her manly guard.

For what are virtues ? (formidable name !)

630

What but the fountain or defence of joy ?

Why then commanded ? need mankind commands,

At once to merit and to make their bliss !—

Great Legislator ! scarce so great as kind

If men are rational, and love delight,

635

Thy gracious law but flatters human choice :

In the transgression lies the penalty ;

And they the most indulge who most obey.

Of Pleasure, next, the final cause explore ;

Its mighty purpose, its important end.

640

Not to turn human brutal, but to build

Divine on human, Pleasure came from Heaven :

In aid to Reason was the goddess sent,

To call up all its strength by such a charm.

Pleasure, first, succours Virtue ; in return,

645

Virtue gives Pleasure an eternal reign.

What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,

Supports life natural, civil, and divine ?

'Tis from the pleasure of repast we live ;

'Tis from the pleasure of applause we please ;

650

'Tis from the pleasure of belief we pray

(All prayer would cease, if unbelieved the prize ;)

It serves ourselves, our species, and our God ;

And to serve more is past the sphere of man.

Glide then, for ever, Pleasure's sacred stream !

655

Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,

And fosters every growth of happy life ;

Makes a new Eden where it flows,—but such

As must be lost, Lorenzo ! by thy fall.

'What mean I by thy fall ?'—Thou'lt shortly see.

660

While Pleasure's nature is at large display'd,

Already sung her origin and ends :

These glorious ends by kind, or by degrees,

When Pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice,

And vengeance too : it hastens into pain.

665

Heaven's justice this proclaims, and that her love.
 What greater evil can I wish my foe,
 Than this full draught of pleasure from a cask 670
 Unbroach'd by just authority, ungaged
 By temperance, by reason unrefined ?
 A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
 Heaven, others, and ourselves ! uninjured these,
 Drink deep ; the deeper, then, the more divine : 675
 Angels are angels from indulgence there.
 'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god !

Dost think thyself a god from other joys ?
 A victim rather ! shortly, sure to bleed. {fail ?
 The wrong must mourn. Can Heaven's appointments
 Can man outwit omnipotence ? strike out 681
 A self-wrought happiness, unmeant by Him
 Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?
 Who forms an instrument ordains from whence
 Its dissonance or harmony shall rise. 685
 Heaven bid the soul this mortal frame inspire ;
 Bid Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
 With unprecious flows of vital joy ;
 And without breathing man as well might hope
 For life, as, without piety, for peace. 690

'Is virtue, then, and piety the same ?'—
 No ; piety is more ; 'tis Virtue's source,
 Mother of every worth, as that of joy.
 Men of the world this doctrine ill digest ;
 They smile at piety, yet boast aloud 695
 ' Good will to men,' nor know they strive to part
 What Nature joins, and thus confute themselves.
 With piety begins all good on earth ;
 'Tis the first born of Rationality !
 Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies ; 700
 Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good.
 A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power.
 Some we can't love, but for the' Almighty's sake ;
 A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man.

Some sinister intent taints all he does,
And in his kindest actions he's unkind.

705

On piety humanity is built,
And on humanity much happiness ;
And yet still more on piety itself.

A soul in commerce with her God is heaven ; 710
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,
The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.

A Deity believed, is joy begun :

A Deity adored, is joy advanced ;

A Deity beloved, is joy matured ! 715

Each branch of piety delight inspires ;

Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,

O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides :

Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,

That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still : 720

Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream

Of glory on the consecrated hour

Of man in audience with the Deity !

Who worships the great God, that instant joins

The first in heaven, and sets his foot on hell. 725

Lorenzo ! when wast thou at church before ?

Thou think'st the service long : but is it just ?—

Though just, unwelcome. Thou hadst rather tread

Unhallow'd ground : the Muse, to win thine ear,

Must take an air less solemn. She complies. 730

Good Conscience ! at the sound the world retires ;

Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles ;

Yet has she her seraglio full of charms,

And such as age shall heighten, not impair.

Art thou dejected ? is thy mind o'ercast ? 735

Amid her fair ones thou the fairest choose

To chase thy gloom.—' Go, fix some weighty truth ;

Chain down some passion ; do some generous good ;

Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile ;

Correct thy friend ; befriend thy greatest foe ; 740

Or, with warm heart and confidence divine.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

191

Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee.
Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,
Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance, 745
Loud mirth, and laughter? Wretched comforters!
Physicians! more than half of thy disease!
Laughter, though never censured yet as sin,
(Pardon a thought that only seems severe)
Is half-immortal, is it much indulged. 750

By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
It shows a scorner, or it makes a fool,
And sins; as hurting others, or ourselves.
'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw
That tickles little minds to mirth effuse; 755

Of grief approaching the portentous sign?
The house of laughter makes a house of woe
A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;
A man dejected is a sight as mean.

What cause for triumph, where such ills abound? 760
What for dejection, where presides a Power
Who call'd us into being—to be bless'd?

So grieve; as conscious grief may rise to joy
So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
Most true, a wise man never will be sad; 765

But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
A shallow stream of happiness betray;
Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense)
This counsel strange should I presume to give— 770
'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay'

There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace:
Ah! do not prize them less because inspired,
As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.

If not inspired, that pregnant page had stood, 775
Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake
Alas!—*should men mistake thee for a fool;—*

What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,

Though tender of thy fame, could interpose? 780

Believe me, sense, here, acts a double part,

And the true critic is a Christian too.

But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.

True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first.

They first themselves offend who greatly please, 785

And travel only gives us sound repose.

Heaven sells all pleasure; effort is the price.

The joys of conquest are the joys of man;

And Glory the victorious laurel spreads

O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream. 790

There is a time when toil must be preferr'd,

Or joy, by mistimed fondness, is undone.

A man of pleasure is a man of pains.

Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bless'd.

False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought; 795

From thought's full bent and energy the true;

And that demands a mind in equal poise,

Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.

Much joy not only speaks small happiness,

But happiness that shortly must expire. 800

Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand?

And, in a tempest, can reflection live?

Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour?

Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd?

Or ope the door to honest Poverty? 805

Or talk with threatening Death, and not turn pale?

In such a world, and such a nature, these

Are needful fundamentals of delight:

These fundamentals give delight indeed;

Delight pure, delicate, and durable; 810

Delight unshaken, masculine, divine;

A constant and a sound, but serious joy.

Is Joy the daughter of Severity?

It is:—yet far my doctrine from severe.

'Rejoice for ever:' it becomes a man; 815

Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.

'Rejoice for ever' (Nature cries,) Rejoice

And drinks to man in her nectareous cup,
 Mix'd up of delicacies for every sense ;
 To the great Founder of the bounteous feast 820
 Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;
 And he that will not pledge her is a churl.
 Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,
 Is the whole science of felicity :
 Yet, sparing, pledge ; her bowl is not the best 825
 Mankind can boast.—' A rational repast,
 Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
 A military discipline of thought,
 To foil temptation in the doubtful field,
 And ever-waking ardour for the right.' 830
 'Tis these first give, then guard a cheerful heart.
 Nought, that is right, think little ; well aware
 What Reason bids, God bids : by his command
 How aggrandized the smallest thing we do !
 Thus nothing is insipid to the wise ; 835
 To thee insipid all but what is mad,
 Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
 ' Mad ! (thou reply'st, with indignation fired)
 Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
 I follow Nature.'—Follow Nature still, 840
 But look it be thine own. Is Conscience, then,
 No part of Nature ? is she not supreme ?
 Thou regicide ! O raise her from the dead !
 Then follow Nature, and resemble God.
 When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued, 845
 Man's nature is unnaturally pleased ;
 And what's unnatural is painful too
 At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee !
 The fact thou know'st ; but not, perhaps, the cause.
 Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid : 850
 Heaven mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
 Her sacred interests with the strings of life :
 Who breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,
 His better self : and is it greater pain

Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine? 855
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.

If one must suffer, which should least be spared?
The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
Ask, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt?—
The joys of sense to mental joys are mean: 860
Sense on the present only feeds: the soul
On past and future forages for joy:
'Tis hers, by retrospect, through time to range,
And forward Time's great sequel to survey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind, 865
Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall.
Guard then thy mind, and leave the rest to Fate!

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
The man is dead who for the body lives,
Lured by the beating of his pulse, to list 870
With every lust that wars against his peace,
And sets him quite at variance with himself.
Thyself first know, then love: a self there is,
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms:
A self there is, as fond of every vice, 875
While every virtue wounds it to the heart;
Humility degrades it, Justice robs,
Bless'd Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
And godlike Magnanimity destroys.
This self, when rival to the former, scorn; 880
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it:—but when Virtue bids,
Toss it or to the fowls or to the flames.
And why? 'tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed:
Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind. 885

For what is vice?—Self-love in a mistake:
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And virtue what? 'tis Self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread Power 890
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

195

self-love is but disguised self-hate,
 mortal than the malice of our foes ;
 hate now scarce felt, than felt full sore,
 being cursed, extinction loud implored; 895
 every thing preferr'd to what we are.
 this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice,
 this choice triumphant, boasts of joy,
 this want of happiness betray'd
 affection to the present hour ! 900
 agitation wanders far a-field ;
 torture pleases : why ? the present pains.—
 what's a secret.—Yes, which all men know,
 now from thee, discover'd unawares.
 senseless agitation restless rolls 905
 heat to cheat, impatient of a pause.
 is it ?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,
 instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
 her physician, Reason, will not cure.
 expedient ! yet thy best ; and while 910
 gates thy pain, it owns it too.
 are Lorenzo's wretched remedies !
 weak have remedies, the wise have joys.
 or wisdom is superior bliss.
 what sure mark distinguishes the wise ? 915
 content Wisdom ever wills the same ;
 little wish is ever on the wing.
 herself is Folly's character,
 wisdom's is a modest self-applause.
 range of evils is thy good supreme, 920
 that in motion canst thou find thy rest.
 greatest strength is shown in standing still,
 the sure symptom of a mind in health
 of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
 pleasure from abroad her joys imports ; 925
 content within, and self-sustain'd, the true.
 he is fix'd and solid as a rock ;
 yet the false, and tossing, as the wave.
 wild wanderer on earth, like Cain ;

That like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy, 930
 Home contemplation her supreme delight :
 She dreads an interruption from without,
 Smit with her own condition, and the more
 Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy till he thinks on earth 935
 There breathes not a more happy than himself :
 Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all ;
 And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.

Such angels all, entitled to repose 939
 On Him who governs fate. Though tempest frowns,
 Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heaven !
 To lean on Him on whom archangels lean !
 With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
 They stand collecting every beam of thought,
 Till their hearts kindle with divine delight ; 945
 For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
 In Israel's dream, come from, and go to heaven ;
 Hence are they studious of sequester'd scenes,
 While noise and dissipation comfort thee.

Were all men happy, revellings would cease, 950
 That opiate for inquietude within.

Lorenzo ! never man was truly bless'd,
 But it compos'd and gave him such a cast,
 As Folly might mistake for want of joy :
 A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud ; 955
 A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.

O for a joy from thy Philander's spring !
 A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
 And permanent as pure ! no turbid stream
 Of rapturous exultation, swelling high, 960
 Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while,
 Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.

What does the man who transient joy prefers ?
 What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream ?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight, 965
 Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy

Bliss there is none but unprecariouſ bliss :
That is the gem^t ſell all, and purchaſe that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies, 970
Not gain'd with eaſe, nor ſafely loved, if gain'd ?
At good fortuitous draw back, and pauſe ;
Suspect it ; what thou canſt ensure, enjoy ;
And nought, but what thou giv'ſt thyſelf, is ſure.
Reason perpetuates joy that Reason gives, 975
And makes it as immortal as herſelf :
To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.

Worth, conſcious Worth ! ſhould abſolutely reign,
And other joys aſk leave for their approach,
Nor, unexamined, ever leave obtain. 980
Thou art all anarchy ; a mob of joys
Wage war, and periſh in intestine broils ;
Nor the leaſt promiſe of internal peace !
No boſom-comfort ! or unborrow'd bliſs !
Thy thoughts are vagabonds ; all outward-bound, 985
Mid ſands, and rocks, and ſtorms, to cruise for pleaſure ;
If gain'd, dear-bought ; and better miſſ'd than gain'd.
Much pain muſt expiate what much pain procured,
Fancy and Senſe, from an infected ſhore,
Thy cargo bring, and peſtilence the prize, 990
Then ſuch thy thirſt, (inſatiable thirſt,
By fond indulgence but inflamed the more)
Fancy ſtill cruizes, when poor Senſe is tired.

Imagination is the Paphian ſhop
Where feeble Happineſs, like Vulcan, lame, 995
Bids foul ideas, in their dark reſeſs,
And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art, thoſe fatal arrows form,
Which murder-all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Wouldſt thou receive them, other thoughts there are
On angel-wing, deſcending from above ; 1001
Which theſe, with art divine, would counter-work,
And form celeftial armour for thy peace.

In this is ſeen Imagination's guilt ;

But who can count her follies? she betrays thee, 16
To think in grandeur there is something great.

For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
Thy genius hunders, elegantly pain'd,
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.

Hence, what disaster!—Though the price was paid
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome, 16
Whose foot, (ye gods!) though cloven, must be kiss'd
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore;
(Such is the fate of honest Protestants!)

And poor Magnificence is starved to death. 16
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—

Be pacified; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;
Pompous expenses, and parades august,
And courts, that insalubrious soil to peace. 16
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye;
True happiness resides in things unseen.

No smiles of Fortune ever bless'd the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys;
That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor: 16
So tell his Holiness, and be revenged.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only contest, what deserves the name.
Give Pleasure's name to nought but what has pass'd
The' authentic seal of Reason (which, like Yorke, 16
Demurs on what it passes) and defies

The tooth of Time; when pass'd, a pleasure still;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be prized, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms our present joy. 16

Some joys the future overcast, and some
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity; some give
Abhor'd Annihilation dreadful charms.

Are rival joys contending for thy choice? 16
Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;

oracle will put all doubt to flight.
 It is the lesson, though my lecture long ;
 good'—and let Heaven answer for the rest !
 t, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant, 1045
 is our day of proof, our land of hope, .
 good man has his clouds that intervene ;
 ds that obscure his sublunary day,
 never conquer : e'en the best must own,
 nce and Resignation are the pillars 1050
 uman peace on earth : the pillars these,
 hose of Seth not more remote from thee,
 his heroic lesson thou hast learn'd,
 own at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
 l at the prospect of unclouded bliss, 1055
 ven in reversion, like the Sun, as yet
 ath the' horizon, cheers us in this world ;
 ds, on souls susceptible of light,
 glorious dawn of our eternal day.
 'his (says Lorenzo) is the fair harangue ! 1060
 can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream,
 tem the tide Heaven pushes through our veins,
 sh sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
 lays his labour level with the world ?
 themselves men make their comment on mankind,
 think nought is, but what they find at home : 1065
 s weakness to chimera turns the truth.
 ing romantic has the Muse prescribed.
 re,* Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
 mortal man, and wretched was the sight. 1070
 alance that, to comfort and exalt,
 see the man immortal : him, I mean,
 , lives as such ; whose heart, full bent on Heaven,
 is all that way, his bias to the stars.
 world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
 lustre more ; though bright, without a foil : 1075
 erve his awful portrait, and admire ;
 stop at wonder ; imitate, and live.

* In a former Night.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
 What nothing less than angel can exceed,
 A man on earth devoted to the skies ;
 Like ships in seas, while in, above the world
 With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
 Behold him seated on a mount serene,
 Above the fogs of Sense, and Passion's storm ;
 All the black cares and tumults of this life,
 Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
 Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
 Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred and the slave
 A mingled mob ! a wandering herd ! he sees,
 Bewilder'd in the vale ; in all unlike !
 His full reverse in all ! what higher praise ?
 What stronger demonstration of the right ?

The present all their care, the future his.
 When public welfare calls, or private want,
 They give to Fame ; his bounty he conceals.
 Their virtues varnish Nature, his exalt.
 Mankind's esteem they court, and he his own.
 Theirs the wild chase of false felicities ;
 His, the composed possession of the true.
 Alike throughout is his consistent peace,
 All of one colour, and an even thread ;
 While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
 With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
 A madman's robe ; each puff of Fortune blows
 The tatters by, and shows their nakedness.

He sees with other eyes than theirs : where the
 Behold a sun, he spies a Deity.
 What makes them only smile, makes him adore.
 Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees.
 An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
 They things terrestrial worship as divine ;
 His hopes, immortal, blow them by as dust
 That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
 Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)

He lays aside to find his dignity ;
 No dignity they find in aught besides.
 They triumph in externals, (which conceal
 Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse : 1120
 Himself too much he prizes to be proud,
 And nothing thinks so great in man, as man.
 Too dear he holds his interest to neglect
 Another's welfare, or his right invade
 Their interest, like a lion lives on prey. 1125
 They kindle at the shadow of a wrong ;
 Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on Heaven,
 Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe :
 Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his peace
 A cover'd heart their character defends ; 1130
 A cover'd heart denies him half his praise .
 With nakedness his innocence agrees,
 While their broad foliage testifies their fall.
 Their no joys end where his full feast begins ;
 His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss. 1135
 To triumph in existence his alone ;
 And his alone triumphantly to think
 His true existence is not yet begun.
 His glorious course was, yesterday, complete ;
 Death then was welcome ; yet life still is sweet. 1140
 But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm
 Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise ?
 They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,
 And show no fortitude but in the field ;
 If there they show it, 'tis for glory shown ; 1145
 Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
 A cordial his sustains, that cannot fail :
 By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
 He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts ;
 All bearing, ail attempting, till he fall ; 1150
 And when he falls, writes *Vici* on his shield.
 From magnanimity all fear above ;
 From nobler recompense above applause,
 Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt, 1
 Lorenzo cries,—‘ Where shines this miracle ?
 From what root rises this immortal man ?’—
 A root that grows not in Lorenzo’s ground :
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

He follows Nature (not like thee)* and shows us
 An uninverted system of a man. 1
 His appetite wears Reason’s golden chain,
 And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
 His passion, like an eagle well reclaim’d,
 Is taught to fly at nought but infinite. 1
 Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,
 His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief
 The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
 And why ?—because affection, more than meet,
 His wisdom leaves not disengaged from Heaven. 11
 Those secondary goods that smile on earth,
 He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
 They most the world enjoy who least admire.
 His understanding scapes the common cloud
 Of fumes arising from the boiling breast. 11
 His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
 By worldly competitions uninflamed.
 The moderate movements of his soul admit
 Distinct ideas, and matured debate,
 An eye impartial, and an even scale ; 11
 Whence judgment sound and unrepenting choice.
 Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise ;
 On its own dunghill wiser than the world.
 What, then, the world ? it must be doubly weak.
 Strange truth ! as soon would they believe their cre
 Yet thus it is, nor otherwise can be, 11
 So far from aught romantic what I sing ;
 Bliss has no being, Virtue has no strength,
 But from the prospect of immortal life.
 Who think earth all, or (what weighs just the same
 Who care no farther must prize what it yields. 1

of its fancies, proud of its parades.
thinks earth nothing can't its charms admire ;
n't a foe, though most malignant, hate,
se that hate would prove his greater foe. 1195
ard for them (yet who so loudly boast
will to men ?) to love their dearest friend ;
ay not he invade their good supreme,
e the least jealousy turns love to gall ?
inés to them, that for a season shines : 1200
act, each thought he questions ; ' What its weight,
our what, a thousand ages hence ?'——
hat it there appears, he deems it now ;
pure are the recesses of his soul.
odlike man has nothing to conceal ; 1205
rtue, constitutionally deep,
abit's firmness, and Affection's flame :
s, allied, descend to feed the fire,
eath, which others slays, makes him a god.
now, Lorenzo ! bigot of this world ! 1210
to disdain poor bigots, caught by Heaven !
by thy scorn, and be reduced to nought !
hat art thou ?—Thou boaster ! while thy glare,
audy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
broad mist, at distance, strikes us most, 1215
ike a mist, is nothing when at hand ;
erit, like a mountain, on approach,
more, and rises nearer to the skies ;
mise now, and by possession, soon
oon, too much, it cannot be) his own. 1220
m this thy just annihilation rise,
zo ! rise to something, by reply.
world, thy client, listens and expects,
ongs to crown thee with immortal praise.—
thou be silent ? no ; for wit is thine, 1225
Vit talks most when least she has to say,
eason interrupts not her career.
say—that mists above the mountains rise,
th a thousand pleasantries amuse ;

She 'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust, 123
And fly conviction in the dust she raised.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste !

'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,

But, as its substitute, a dire disease.

Pernicious talent ! flatter'd by the world, 123

By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.

Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo ! wit abounds ;

Passion can give it ; sometimes wine inspires

The lucky flash ; and madness rarely fails.

Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs 124

Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.

For thy renown 'twere well was this the worst ;

Chance often hits it ; and, to pique thee more,

See Dulness, blundering on vivacities,

Shakes her sage head at the calamity 12

Which has exposed, and let her down to thee.

But Wisdom, awful Wisdom ! which inspects,

Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, informs,

Seizes the right, and holds it to the last,

How rare ! in senates, synods, sought in vain ; 12

Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few ;

While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,

Frequent, as fatal, Wit. In civil life

Wit makes an enterpriser, Sense a man.

Wit hates authority, commotion loves, 12

And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.

In states 'tis dangerous ; in religion, death.

Shall Wit turn Christian when the dull believe ?

Sense is our helmet, Wit is but the plume ;

The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves. 12

Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound ;

When cut by Wit it casts a brighter beam ;

Yet Wit apart, it is a diamond still.

Wit, widow'd of good sense, is worse than nought ;

It hoists more sail to run against a rock. 13

Thus a half Chesterfield is quite a fool,
Whom dull fools scorn and bless their want of wit

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

206

ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
 sirens sit, to sing thee to thy fate !
 which our reason bears no part, 1276
 sorrow, tickling ere it stings.
 the cooings of the world allure thee ;
 if her lovers ever found her true ?
 of this bad world who little know :—
 , we much must know her, to be safe. 1278
 r the world, not love her, is thy point ;
 as but little, nor that little long.
 , I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
 of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
 ightless agitation's idle child, 1280
 ntles high, that sparkles, and expires,
 the soul more vapid than before ;
 al ovation ! such as holds
 nerce with our reason, but subsists
 s, through the well toned tubes, well strain'd ;
 achine ! scarce ever tuned aright ; 1286
 m it jars—thy sirens sing no more ;
 ce is done ; the demi-god is thrown
 potheosis !) beneath the man,
 'd gloom immersed, or fell despair. 1290
 ou yet dull enough despair to dread,
 le at destruction ? if thou art,
 buckler, take it to the field ;
 of battle is this mortal life !)
 nger threatens, lay it on thy heart, 1295
 sentence proof against the world.
 ody, fortune ; every good pertains
 f these ; but prize not all alike ;
 ds of fortune to thy body's health,
 soul, and soul submit to God. 1300
 thou build lasting happiness ? do this :
 erted pyramid can never stand.
 truth doubtful ? it outshines the Sun ;
 Sun shines not but to show us this,
 e lesson of mankind on earth : 1306

And yet—yet what? No news! mankind is mad;
 Such mighty numbers list against the right,
 (And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve!)
 They talk themselves to something like belief
 That all earth's joys are theirs; as Athens' fool 1310
 Grinn'd from the port, on every sail his own.

They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
 Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.

To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile:
 Hard either task! the most abandon'd own 1315

That others, if abandon'd, are undone:

Then for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,

(And Providence denies it long repose)

O how laborious is their gaiety!

They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen, 1320

Scarce muster patience to support the farce,

And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.

Scarce did I say? some cannot sit it out;

Of their own daring hands the curtain draw,

And show us what their joy by their despair. 1325

The clotted hair! gored breast! blaspheming eye!
 Its impious fury still alive in death!

Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But Heaven denies

A cover to such guilt, and so should man.

Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade, 1330

The' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;

The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;

The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays,

From raging riot, (slower suicides!)

And pride in these, more execrable still! 1335

How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, these,

That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.

From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be bless'd.

Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour:

When an immortal being aims at bliss, 1340

Duration is essential to the name.

O for a joy from reason! joy from that

Which makes man man, and, exercised aright,

Will make him more : a bounteous joy ! that gives
And promises ; that weaves, with art divine, 1345

The richest prospect into present peace :

A joy ambitious ! joy in common held

With thrones ethereal, and their greater far :

A joy high-privileged from chance, time, death !

A joy which death shall double, judgment crown !

Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage, 1351

Through bless'd Eternity's long day, yet still

Not more remote from sorrow than from him,

Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours

So much of Deity on guilty dust. 1355

There, O my Lucia ! may I meet thee there,

Where not thy presence can improve my bliss !

Affects not this the sages of the world ?

Can nought affect them, but what fools them too ?

Eternity, depending on an hour, 1360

Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise.

Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs

May shun the light) at your designs on Heaven ;

Sole point ! where overbashful is your blame.

Are you not wise ?—you know you are : yet hear 1365

One truth, amid your numerous schemes mislaid,

Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen ;

' Our schemes to plan by this world, or the next,

Is the sole difference between wise and fool.'

All worthy men will weigh you in this scale : 1370

What wonder then, if they pronounce you light ?

Is their esteem alone not worth your care ?

Accept my simple scheme of common sense,

This save your fame, and make two worlds your own.

The world replies not ;—but the world persists, 1375

And puts the cause off to the longest day,

Planning evasions for the day of doom :

So far, at that rehearsing, from redress,

They then turn witnesses against themselves.

Hear that, Lorenzo ! nor be wise to-morrow.

Haste, haste ! a man, by nature, is in haste ; 1380

For who shall answer for another hour ?

'Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,
And that thou canst not do, this side the skies.

Ye sons of Earth ! (nor willing to be more !) 1385
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truths which, at church, you might have heard in prose)
Has ventured into light, well pleased the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain, 1390

And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But praise she need not fear : I see my fate,
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Must die, and die unwept ; O thou minute 1395
Devoted page ! go forth among thy foes ;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death : mankind, incensed,
Denies thee long to live ; nor shalt thou rest
When thou art dead ; in Stygian shades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne, 1401
And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World !
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And volunteers around his banner swarm ;
Prudent, as Prussia in her zeal for Gaul. 1405

'Are all, then, fools?' Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
But such as hold this doctrine (new to thee,)
'The mother of true wisdom is the will :'
The noblest intellect, a fool without it.
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do, 1410
In arts and sciences, in wars and peace ;
But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the most indulgence can afford,—
'Thy wisdom all can do but—make thee wise.' 1415
Nor think this censure is severe on thee :
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

THE CONSOLATION.

NIGHT IX.

CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,
I. A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.
II. A NIGHT ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED
TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

— Fatis contraria fata rependens. Virg. —

As when a traveller, a long day pass'd
In painful search of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates a while his labour lost;
Then, cheers his heart with what his fate affords,
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due season calls him to repose;
Thus I, long travel'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,
Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career,
Warn'd by the languor of life's evening ray,
At length have housed me in an humble shed,
Where, future wandering banish'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,
I chase the moments with a serious song.
Song soothes our pains, and age has pains to soothe.
When age, care, crime, and friends embraced at home

Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade,
 Which hovers o'er me, quench the' etherial fire,
 Canst thou, O Night ! indulge one labour more ? 20
 One labour more indulge ! then sleep, my strain !
 Till, haply, waked by Raphael's golden lyre,
 Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow cease,
 To bear a part in everlasting lays ;
 Though far, far higher set ; in aim, I trust, 25
 Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

Has not the Muse asserted pleasures pure,
 Like those above, exploding other joys ?
 Weigh what was urged, Lorenzo ; fairly weigh,
 And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still ? 30
 I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold :
 But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
 Thy smile's sincere ; not more sincere can be
 Lorenzo's smile, than my compassion for him.
 The sick in body call for aid ; the sick 35
 In mind are covetous of more disease ;
 And, when at worst, they dream themselves quite well.
 To know ourselves diseased is half our cure.
 When Nature's blush by custom is wiped off,
 And Conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes, 40
 Has into manners naturalized our crimes,
 The curse of curses is our curse to love ;
 To triumph in the blackness of our guilt
 (As Indians glory in the deepest jet.)
 And throw aside our senses with our peace. 45

But, grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy ;
 Grant joy, and glory quite unsullied share ;
 Yet, still, it all deserves Lorenzo's heart.
 No joy, no glory glitters in thy sight,
 But, through the thin partition of an hour, 50
 I see its shades move by Destiny ;
 And that in sorrow buried, this in shame ;
 While howling furies ring the doleful knell,

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene ;
 Their gear so proud, their buskin, and their plume ?
 How many sleep, who kept the world awake
 With lustre and with noise ! Has Death proclaim'd
 A truce, and hung his sated lance on high ? 60
 'Tis brandish'd still, nor shall the present year
 Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
 Or spread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought ;
 Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality, 65
 Though in a style more florid, full as plain
 As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
 What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths
 Turn'd flatterers of Life, in paint or marble,
 The wall-stain'd canvass, or the featured stone ? 70
 Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene :
 Joy peeples her pavilion from the dead.

'Profess'd diversions ! cannot these escape ?'
 Far from it : these present us with a shroud,
 And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave. 75
 As some bold plunderers for buried wealth,
 We ransack tombs for pastime ; from the dust
 Call up the sleeping here ; bid him tread
 The scene for our amusement. How like gods
 We sit ; and, wrapp'd in immortality, 80
 Shed generous tears on wretches born to die ;
 Their fate deploring, to forget our own !

What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives
 But legacies in blossom ? Our lean soil,
 Urgent grown, and rank in rank, 85
 From friends interr'd beneath, a rich manure ?
 Like other worms, we banquet on the dead ;
 Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
 Our present frailties, or approaching fate ?

Lorenzo ! such the glories of the world ! 90
 What is the world itself ? thy world ? — a grave.
 Where is the dust that has not been alive ?
 The spade, the plough disturb our ancestors.

From human mould we reap our daily bread :
 The globe around earth's hollow surface shaken,
 And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
 O'er devastation we blind revels keep :
 Whole buried towns support the dancer's heel.
 The moist of human frame the Sun exhales ;
 Winds scatter, through the mighty void, the dry :
 Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
 And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire :
 Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils,
 As Nature wide our ruins spread. Man's death
 Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.
 Nor man alone ; his breathing bust expires ;
 His tomb is mortal ; empires die : where, now,
 The Roman ? Greek ? they stalk, an empty name !
 Yet few regard them in this useful light,
 Though half our learning is their epitaph.
 When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
 That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
 O Death ! I stretch my view, what visions rise !
 What triumphs ! toils imperial ! arts divine !
 In wither'd laurels glide before my sight !
 What lengths of far famed ages, billowed high
 With human agitation, roll along
 In unsubstantial images of air !
 The melancholy ghosts of dead Renown,
 Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause,
 With penitential aspect, as they pass,
 All point at earth, and hiss at human pride ;
 The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great :
 But, O Lorenzo ! far the rest above,
 Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,
 One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
 And shakes my frame. Of one departed World
 I see the mighty shadow : oozy wreath
 And dismal sea-weed crown her : o'er her urn

's dissolution, soon, in flames :
 Cassandra, prophecies in vain :
 to many ; not, I trust, to thee.
 now'st thou not, or art thou loath to know,
 at decree, the counsel of the skies ? 136
 and Conflagration, dreadful powers !
 ministers of vengeance ! chain'd in caves
 , apart, the giant furies roar ;
 r such their horrid rage for ruin, 140
 al conflict would they rise, and wage
 war, till one was quite devour'd.
 for this ordain'd their boundless rage
 heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,
 nine, pestilence, are found too weak 146
 ge a world for her enormous crimes,
 e, let loose alternate : down they rush,
 d tempestuous, from the' eternal throne,
 esistible commission arm'd,
 ld, in vain corrected, to destroy ; 150
 : Creation of the shocking scene.
 thou, Lorengo ! what depends on man ?
 of Nature, as for man her birth.
 ctors change Earth's transitory scenes,
 e Creation groan with human guilt. 155
 st it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
 if waters ! At the destined hour,
 ud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
 e formidable sons of fire,
 s, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play 160
 rious engines : all at once disgorge
 zing magazines ; and take, by storm,
 r terrestrial citadel of man.
 ag period ! when each mountain height
 Vesuvius ; rocks eternal pour 166
 lted mass, as rivers once they pour'd ;
 b, and final Ruin fiercely drives
 'shabare o'er Creation !—while aloft,
 astonishment : if more can be

Far other firmament than e'er was seen, 170

Than e'er was thought by man ! far other stars !

Stars animate, that govern those of fire ;

Far other sun !—a Sun, O how unlike

The Babe at Bethlehem ! how unlike the Man

That groan'd on Calvary !—ye't He it is ; 175

That Man of sorrows ! O how changed ! what pomp

In grandeur terrible all Heaven descends !

And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.

A swift archangel, with his golden wing,

As blots and clouds that darken and disgrace 180

The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.

And now, all dress removed, Heaven's own pure day,

Full on the confines of our ether flames,

While (dreadful contrast !) far, how far beneath !

Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas 185

And storms sulphureous ; her voracious jaws

Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.

Lorenzo ! welcome to this scene ; the last

In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.

This strikes ; if aught can strike thee ; this awakes 190

The most supine ; this snatches man from death.

Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo ! then, and follow me ;

Where truth, the most momentous man can hear ;

Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight :

I find my inspiration in my theme : 195

The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,

And worldly Fancy feeds on golden dreams,

To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour ;

At midnight, 'tis presumed, this pomp will burst 200

From tenfold darkness, sudden as the spark

From smitten steel ; from nitrous grain the blaze.

Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more !

The day is broke, which never more shall close !

Above, around, beneath, amazement all ! 205

Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !

Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire !

THE CONSOLATION.

213

aggling in the pangs of death !
hear her ? dost thou not deplore
avulsions, and her final groan ? 216

now ? Ah me ! the ground is gone
stood, Lorenzo ! while thou mayst,
firm support, or sink for ever !

from whence ? Vain hope ! it is too late !
, for shelter, shall the guilty fly, 215
nation turns the good man pale !

for which all other days were made ;
th rose from Chaos, man from earth,
y, the date of gods,

poor earth-created man ! 220
bread, decision, and despair !

these each sublunary wish
per grasp, and drops the world,
each reed of hope in Heaven.

thee !—and art thou absent then ? 225
'tis here ;—it is begun :—

un the grand assize,
: deputed Conscience scales
unal, and forestals our doom ;

, by forestalling, proves it sure. 230
elf should man void judgment pass ?

laughing at her sons ?
ice sent, her sentence will support,
e assert that God in man. *cf. vii. 2 & 3.*

y they ! that enter now the court. 235
in their bosoms : but how rare,
magnanimity, how rare !

se the man who stands himself ;
meet his naked heart alone ;
repid the full charge it brings, 240

hence future murmurs there !
ies, and, flying, is undone.
ward ? no :) the coward flies ;

inks slightly ; asks, but fears to know
truth ? with Pilate, and retires : 244

Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng
Asylum sad! from Reason, Hope, and Heaven.

Shall all but man look out with ardent eyes
For that great day which was ordain'd for man?
O day of consummation! mark supreme 2

(If men are wise) of human thought! nor least
Or in the sight of angels, or their King!

Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order rising, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, surround this scene, 2

Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.

Angels look out for thee; for thee, their Lord,

To vindicate his glory; and for thee

Creation universal calls aloud

To disinvolve the moral world, and give 2

To Nature's renovation brighter charms.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?

I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!

All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round! 2

All deities, like summer's swarms, on-wing'd

All basking in the full meridian blaze!

I see the judge enthroned! the flaming guard!

The volume open'd! open'd every heart!

A sunbeam, pointing out each secret thought! 2

No patron! intercessor none! now pass'd

The sweet, the element, mediatorial hour!

For guilt no plea! to pain no pause! no bound!

Inexorable all! and all extreme!

Nor man alone, the foe of God and man, 2

From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,

And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd,

Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.

All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace.

Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll 2

His baleful eyes! he curses whom he deems,

And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is

THE CONSOLATION.

217

n't tell me ; angels cannot guess
 d, from created beings lock'd 236
 as ; but the process and the place
 obscure ; for these may man inquire.
 great close of human hopes and fears !
 of hearts ! great finisher of fates !
 ! and great beginning ! say, where art thou ?
 a time, or in eternity ? 291
 rnity nor time I find thee :
 two monarchs, on their borders meet,
 of all elapsed or unarrived !)
 te, how best their powers allied 295
 the grandeur, or discharge the wrath
 rom both their monarchies obey.
 is vast fabric for him built (and doom'd
 to fall) now bursting o'er his head,
 he Sun, extinguish'd, from beneath 300
 of hideous darkness calls his sons
 long slumber, from earth's heaving womb,
 birth ! contemporary throng !
 one call, upstart'd from one bed,
 one crowd, appall'd with one amaze, 305
 rom o'er, Eternity ! to thee :
 king deposed disdains to live)
 his own scythe, nor falls alone ;
 t foe falls with him ; Time, and he
 r'd all Time's offspring, Death, expire. 310
 s ! Eternity now reigns alone !
 nity ! offended queen !
 entment to mankind how just !
 ntent, soliciting access,
 as she knock'd at human hearts ! 315
 ay their hospitality,
 call'd ! and with the voice of God !
 ulse, excluded as a cheat !
 hile foulest foes found welcome there !
 cheat, now all things but her smile. 320
 er twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,

As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,
 With banners streaming as the comet's blaze,
 And clarions louder than the deep in storms,
 Sonorous as immortal breath can blow, 325
 Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
 Of light, of darkness, in a middle field,
 Wide as creation! populous as wide!
 A neutral region! there to mark the' event
 Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes 330
 Detain'd them close spectators, through a length
 Of ages, ripening to this grand result;
 Ages as yet unnumber'd but by God,
 Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
 The rights of virtue, and his own renown. 335

Eternity, the various sentence pass'd,
 Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,
 Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues?
 'The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven. 340
 The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns,
 Her adamant key's enormous size
 Through Destiny's inextricable wards,
 Deep driving every bolt on both their fates;
 Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven, 345
 Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,
 Ten thousand thousand fathom, there to rust,
 And ne'er unlock her resolution more.
 The deep resounds, and hell, through all her glooms,
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar. 350

O how unlike the chorus of the skies!
 O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake
 The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!
 Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;
 And louder far than when Creation rose, 355
 To see Creation's godlike aim and end,
 So well accomplish'd! so divinely closed!

THE CONSOLATION.

219

No fancied God ; a God, indeed, descends, 360
 To solve all knots ; to strike the moral home ;
 To throw full day on darkest scenes of time ;
 To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
 Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,
 The charm'd spectators thunder their applause, 365
 And the vast void beyond applause resounds.

What then am I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,
 And worlds celestial, is there found on earth
 A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,
 Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains? 370
 Censure on thee, Lorenzo ! I suspend,
 And turn it on myself ; how greatly due !
 All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done ;
 And who, but God, resumed the friends He gave ?
 And have I been complaining, then, so long ? 375
 Complaining of his favours, pain and death ?
 Who, without Pain's advice, would e'er be good ?
 Who, without Death, but would be good in vain ?
 Pain is to save from pain ; all punishment
 To make for peace ; and death to save from death ;
 And second death to guard immortal life ; 381
 To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
 And turn the tide of souls another way ;
 By the same tenderness divine ordain'd
 That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man 385
 A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene ;
 Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.
 All evils natural are moral goods ;
 All discipline indulgence, on the whole. 390
 None are unhappy ; all have cause to smile,
 But such as to themselves that cause deny.
 Our faults are at the bottom of our pains :
 Error in act, or judgment, is the source
 Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake ; 395
 And Nature tax, when false opinion stings.

Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd ;
But chiefly then, when Grief puts in her claim.

Joy from the joyous frequently betrays,
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe. 400

Joy amidst ills, corroborates, exalts ;
'Tis joy and conquest ; joy and virtue too.

A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heaven, earth, ourselves ; 'tis duty, glory, peace !
Affliction is the good man's shining scene, 405
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.

As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.

Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire.

The crown of manhood is a winter joy ; 410
An evergreen that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness, to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot ;
A part which few possess ! I'll pay life's tax, 415
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man ;
Who thinks it is, shall never be a god.
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What spoke proud Passion ?—' Wish my being lost ?'
Presumptuous ! blasphemous ! absurd ! and false ! 421
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am ;
And therefore that I may be—what ? Lorenzo !
Look inward, and look deep ; and deeper still ;
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs, 425
In golden veins, through all eternity !
Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
New ages, where this phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise, 430
And fly through infinite, and all unlock ;
And (if deserved) by Heaven's redundant love,
Made half-adorable itself, adore ;

* Referring to the First Night.

THE CONSOLATION.

221

in adoration, endless joy !
 thou, not master of a moment here, 435
 the flower, and fleeting as the gale,
 past a whole eternity, enrich'd
 a kind Omnipotence can pour.
 I am fell, no mortal uninspired
 yet conceived, or ever shall, 440
 and is God, how great (if good) is man.
 too largely from Heaven's love can hope,
 as hoped he labours to secure. [Thee ;
 there are none : All gracious ! none from
 in full many ! Numerous is the race 445
 lest ill, and those immortal too,
 ' Madness on fair Liberty,
 as daughter, hell-debauch'd ! her hand alone
 destruction to the sons of men,
 'd by thine ; high-wall'd with adamant, 450
 with terrors reaching to this world,
 er'd with the thunders of thy law,
 threats are mercies, whose injunctions guides,
 ; not restraining Reason's choice ;
 anctions, unavoidable results 455
 ture's course, indulgently reveal'd ;
 al'd, more dangerous, nor less sure.
 indulgent father warns his sons,
 , fly that ;—nor always tells the cause ;
 o reward, as duty to his will, 460
 et needful to their own repose.
 God of wonders ! (if, thy love survey'd,
 se the name of wonderful retains)
 cks are these on which to build our trust !
 s admit no blemish ; none I find ; 465
 lone,—That none is to be found :
 to soften Censure's hardy crime ;
 to palliate peevish Grief's complaint,
 e a demon, murmuring from the dust,
 o judgment call her judge.—Supreme ! 470
 bless Thee ; most for the severe ;

Her death*—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,
 That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent !
 It thunders ;—but it thunders to preserve ;
 It strengthens what it strikes ; its wholesome dread
 Averts the dreaded pain : its hideous groans 476
 Join heaven's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,
 Great Source of good alone ! how kind in all !
 In vengeance kind ! pain, death, Gehena, save !

Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind ! 480
 Not that alone which solaces and shines,
 The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.
 The winter is as needful as the spring ;
 The thunder as the sun. A stagnate mass
 Of vapours breeds a pestilential air . 485
 Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
 To Nature's health, than purifying storms.
 The dread volcano ministers to good ;
 Its smother'd flames might undermine the world.
 Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man : 490
 Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd ;
 And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.

Man is responsible for ills received ;
 Those we call wretched are a chosen band,
 Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace. 495
 Amid my list of blessings infinite
 Stand this the foremost, ' That my heart has bled.'
 'Tis Heaven's last effort of good will to man.
 When pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair !
 Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls, 500
 Or grieves too much, deserves not to be bless'd ;
 Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart.
 Reason absolves the grief which reason ends.
 May Heaven ne'er trust my friend with happiness,
 Till it has taught him how to bear it well 505
 By previous pain, and made it safe to smile !
Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain,
Nor hazard their extinction from excess.

THE CONSOLATION.

223

My change of heart a change of style demands ;
The Consolation cancels the Complaint, 510
And makes a convert of my guilty song.

As when o'erlabour'd, and inclined to breathe,
A panting traveller some rising ground,
Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round,
And measures with his eye the various vale, 515
The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has pass'd,
And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,
Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil ;
Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent
The Muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod, 520
Various, extensive, beaten but by few ;
And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
Pause, and with pleasure meditate an end,
Though still remote ; so fruitful is my theme.
Through many a field of moral and divine 525
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen
In human ways, and much of false and vain,
Which none who travel this bad road can miss.
O'er friends deceased full heartily she wept ;
Of love divine the wonders she display'd ; 530
Proved man immortal ; show'd the source of joy ;
The grand tribunal raised ; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Though not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke, 535
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

What then remains ? much ! much ! a mighty debt
To be discharged. These thoughts, O Night ! are thine ;
From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs, 541
While others slept. So Cynthia (poets feign,)
In shadows veil'd, soft-sliding from her sphere,
Her shepherd cheer'd ; of her enamour'd less
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung, 545
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing

Immortal Silence ! where shall I begin ?
 Where end ? or how steal music from the spheres
 To sooth their goddess ?

O majestic Night !

Nature's great ancestor ! Day's elder-born ! 550
 And fated to survive the transient Sun !
 By mortals and immortals seen with awe !
 A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
 An azure zone thy waist ; clouds, in heaven's loom
 Wrought through varieties of shape and shade, 555
 In ample folds of drapery divine,
 Thy flowing mantle form, and, heaven throughout,
 Voluminously pour thy pompous train :
 Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
 Inspiring aspect !) claim a grateful verse ; 560
 And, like a sab's curtain starr'd with gold,
 Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

And what, O man ! so worthy to be sung ?
 What more prepares us for the songs of heaven ?
 Creation of archangels is the theme ! 565
 What to be sung so needful, what so well
 Celestial joys prepare us to sustain ?
 The soul of man, His face design'd to see
 Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
 Has here a previous scene of objects great 570
 On which to dwell ; to stretch to that expanse
 Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
 Of admiration, to contract that awe,
 And give her whole capacities that strength
 Which best may qualify for final joy. 575

The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,
 The deeper draught shall they receive of heaven. [bliss,

Heaven's King ! whose face unveil'd consummates
 Redundant bliss ! which fills that mighty void
 The whole Creation leaves in human hearts ! 580

Thou ! who didst touch the lip of Jesse's son,
Rapp'd in sweet contemplation of these fires,

THE CONSOLATION.

225

of thy works material the supreme
attempt, assist my daring song : 585

ne from Earth's enclosure ; from the Sun's
cted circle set my heart at large ;
ite my spirit, give it range

h provinces of thought yet unexplored ;
me, by this stupendous scaffolding, 590

n's golden steps, to climb to Thee :
me with art great Nature to control,
read a lustre o'er the shades of night.

hy kind assent ? and shall the Sun
at midnight, rising in my song ? 595

azo ! come, and warm thee : thou, whose heart,
little heart, is moor'd within a nook
obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh ;

ocean calls, a nobler port ;
y pilot, I thy prosperous gale : 600

thy voyage through yon azure main,
ithout tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,
ence thou mayst import eternal wealth,

ve to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
vels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms ! 605

ranger to the world ! thy tour begin ;
r through Nature's universal orb.

delineates her whole chart at large,
ing souls, that sail among the spheres ;

n how purblind, if unknown the whole. 610
cles spacious earth, then travels here,

n he never was from home before.

ay Prometheus !* from thy pointed rock
ambition, if unchain'd, we'il mount ;

nocently, steal celestial fire, 615
dle our devotion at the stars ;

hat shall not chain, but set thee free.

our atmosphere's intestine wars,
untain-head, the magazine of hail ;

he northern nests of feather'd snows, 620

* See Night the Eighth, p. 182.

The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
 That forms the crooked lightning : 'bove the caves
 Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,
 And tune their tender voices to that roar,
 Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world ; 635
 Above misconstrued omens of the sky,
 Far travel'd comets' calculated blaze,
 Elance thy thought, and think of more than man :
 Thy soul, till now contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
 Blighted by blasts of Earth's unwholesome air, 630
 Will blossom here ; spread all her faculties
 To these bright ardours , every power unfold,
 And rise into sublimities of thought.
 Stars teach, as well as shine. At Nature's birth
 'Thus their commission ran.—' Be kind to man.' 635
 Where art thou, poor benighted traveller !
 The stars will light thee, though the moon should fail.
 Where art thou, more benighted ! more astray !
 In ways immoral ? the stars call thee back,
 And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right. 640
 This prospect vast, what is it ?—Weigh'd aright
 'Tis Nature's system of divinity,
 And every student of the night inspires.
 'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand ;
 Scripture authentic ! uncorrupt by man. 645
 Lorenzo ! with my radius (the rich gift
 Of thought nocturnal) I'll point out to thee
 Its various lessons ; some that may surprise
 An unadept in mysteries of Night ;
 Little, perhaps, expected in her school, 650
 Nor thought to grow on planet or on star ;
 Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign,
 Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
 Exists, indeed,—a lecture to mankind !
 What read we here ?—the' existence of a God ? 655
 Yes : and of other beings, man above ;
 Natives of ether ! sons of higher climes !
 And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,

THE CONSOLATION.

227

Eternity is written in the skies.

And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine; 660

Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,

Virtue grows here; here springs the sovereign cure

Of almost every vice, but chiefly thine,

Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too, 665

Though not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleasure!

Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought,*

Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest.

Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,

And the sun's noontide blaze prime dawn of day, 670

Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,

Commencing one of our antipodes!

In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt,

'Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal,

And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift, 675

If bold to meet the face of injured Heaven)

To yonder stars: for other ends they shine

Than to light revellers from shame to shame,

And thus be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space, 680

With infinite of lucid orbs replete,

Which set the living firmament on fire,

At the first glance, in such an overwhelm

Of wonderful on man's astonish'd sight

Rushes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride, 685

Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power

Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;

To draw up man's ambition to himself,

And bind our chaste affections to his throne.

Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth, 690

And welcomed on heaven's coast with most applause;

An humble, pure, and heavenly minded heart,

Are here inspired;—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy wrath deprived of its reproof,

* In Night the Eighth.

Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.

695

The planets of each system represent

Kind neighbours ; mutual amity prevails ;

Sweet interchange of rays, received, return'd,

Enlightening and enlighten'd ! all, at once,

Attracting and attracted ! patriot-like,

700

None sins against the welfare of the whole ;

But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,

Affords an emblem of millennial love.

Nothing in nature, much less conscious being,

Was e'er created solely for itself.

705

Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this

Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race,

Thou most inflammable ! thou wasp of men !

Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found

710

As rightly set, as are the starry spheres :

'Tis Nature's structure broke, thy stubborn Will

Breeds all that uncelestial discord there.

Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave ?

Canst thou descend from converse with the skies, 715

And seize thy brother's throat ?—For what ?—a clod ?

An inch of earth ? The planets cry, ' Forbear.'

They chase our double darkness, Nature's gloom,

And (kinder still !) our intellectual night.

And see, Day's amiable sister sends

720

Her invitation, in the softest rays

Of mitigated lustre ; courts thy sight,

Which suffers from her tyrant brother's blaze.

Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,

Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye ;

725

With gain and joy, she bribes thee to be wise.

Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe

Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,

And deep reception in the' entender'd heart ;

While light peeps through the darkness like a spy, 730

And darkness shows its grandeur by the light !

or is the profit greater than the joy,
 ' human hearts at glorious objects glow
 nd admiration can inspire delight.

What speak I more than I this moment feel? 735

With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck,
 Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise !)
 hen into transport starting from her trance,
 With love and admiration how she glows !

his gorgeous apparatus ! this display ! 740

his ostentation of creative power !

his theatre !—what eye can take it in ?

y what divine enchantment was it raised,

or minds of the first magnitude to launch

endless speculation, and adore ? 745

ne Sun by day, by night ten thousand shine,

nd light us deep into the Deity ;

ow boundless in magnificence and might !

what a confluence of ethereal fires,

om urns unnumber'd, down the steep of heaven 750

reams to a point, and centres in my sight !

or tarries there ; I feel it at my heart ;

y heart, at once, it humbles and exalts ;

ays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.

ho sees it unexalted, or unawed ? 755

ho sees it, and can stop at what is seen ?

aterial offspring of Omnipotence !

animate, all animating birth !

ork worthy him who made it ! worthy praise !

I praise ! praise more than human ! nor denied 760

ay praise divine !—But though man, drown'd in sleep,

ithholds his homage, not alone I wake ;

ight legions swarm unseen, and sing unheard

mortal ear, the glorious Architect,

this his universal temple, hung 765

ith lustres, with innumerable lights,

hat shed religion on the soul ; at once

he temple and the preacher ! O how loud

calls Devotion ! genuine growth of Night !

Devotion ! daughter of Astronomy !

770

An undevout astronomer is mad.

True ; all things speak a God ; but in the small,

Men trace out Him ; in great, He seizes man ;

Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills

With new inquiries, mid associates new.

775

Tell me, ye stars ! ye planets ! tell me, all

Ye starr'd and planeted inhabitants ! what is it ?

What are these sons of wonder ? Say, proud Arch,

(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)

Built with divine ambition ! in disdain

780

Of limit, built ! built in the taste of heaven !

Vast concave ! ample dome ! wast thou design'd

A meet apartment for the Deity ?—

Not so ; that thought alone thy state impairs,

Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,

785

And strengthens thy diffusive ; dwarfs the whole,

And makes a Universe an orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,

Thy right regain'd thy grandeur is restored,

O Nature ! wide flies off the' expanding round :

790

As when whole magazines, at once, are fired,

The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow,

The vast dislosion dissipates the clouds,

Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies ;

Thus (but far more) the' expanding round flies off,

And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,

796

Might teem with new creation ; reinflamed,

Thy luminaries triumph, and assume

Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange,

Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,

800

Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,

From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense :

For sure to sense they truly are divine,

And half absolved idolatry from guilt,

Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was

805

In those, who put forth all they had of man

Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher :

THE CONSOLATION.

231

But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd, and thought
What was their highest must be their adored.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount?
And are there, then, Lorenzo! those to whom 811
Unseen, and unexistent, are the same?

And if incomprehensible is join'd,
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?
Why has the almighty Builder thrown aside 815

All measure in his work? stretch'd out his line
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)

Deep in the bosom of his Universe
Dropp'd down that reasoning mite, that insect, man!
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?— 821

That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
For disbelief of wonders in himself.

Shall God be less miraculous than what
His hand has formed? shall mysteries descend 825

From unmysterious? things more elevate,
Be more familiar? uncreated lie

More obvious than created, to the grasp
Of human thought? The more of wonderful
Is heard in Him, the more we should assent. 830

Could we conceive him, God he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.

A God alone can comprehend a God:
Man's distance how immense! On such a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange) 835

Nothing can satisfy, but what confounds;
Nothing but what astonishes, is true.

The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing,
And every star sheds light upon thy creed.
These stars, this furniture, this coast of heaven, 840

If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believed;
But thine eye tells thee, the romance is true.

The grand of Nature is the' Almighty's oath,
In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.

How my mind, opening at this scene, imbibes 845

The moral emanations of the skies,
 While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!
 Has the Great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds
 To tell us, He resides above them all,
 In glory's unapproachable recess? 850

And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
 The sumptuous, the magnificent embassy,
 A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear
 From whom they come, or what they would impart
 For man's emolument; sole cause that stoops 855

Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouse;
 Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,
 And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.
 Who sees, but is confounded or convinced?
 Renounces reason, or a God adores? 860

Mankind was sent into the world to see:
 Sight gives the science needful to their peace;
 That obvious science asks small learning's aid.
 Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar?
 Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns? 865
 Or travel history's enormous round?

Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave
 A make to man directive of his thought;
 A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
 As who shall say, 'Read thy chief lesson there.' 870
 Too late to read this manuscript of heaven,
 When, like a parchment scroll, shrunk up by flames,
 It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight.

Lesson how various! not the God alone,
 I see his ministers; I see, diffused 875
 In radiant orders, essences sublime,
 Of various offices, of various plume,
 In heavenly liveries distinctly clad,
 Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
 Or all commix'd; they stand, with wings outspread
 Listening to catch the Master's least command, 881
 And fly through nature ere the moment ends;
 Numbers innumerable!—Well conceived

| | |
|--|-----|
| THE CONSOLATION. | 233 |
| aid by Christian ! O'er each sphere | |
| angel, to direct its course, | 885 |
| fan, its flames ; or to discharge | |
| trusts unknown ; for who can see | |
| of matter, and imagine mind | |
| alone inanimate was made) | |
| gly dispensed ? that nobler son, | 890 |
| a great Sire !—'Tis thus the skies | |
| f superiors numberless, | |
| excellence, above mankind, | |
| rth, in magnitude, the spheres. | |
| cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us : | 895 |
| d theatre are all our deeds. | |
| ousand demigods descend | |
| am we see, to walk-with men. | |
| ction ! strong restraint from ill ! | |
| our virtue finds still stronger aid | 900 |
| ethereal glories sense surveys. | |
| like magic, strikes from this blue vault : | |
| ttention is it view'd ? we feel | |
| accour, unimplored, unthought. | |
| elf does half the work of man. | 905 |
| , mountains, forests, deserts, rocks, | |
| story's height, the depth profound | |
| nean excavated grotts, | |
| d, and vaulted high, and yawning wide, | |
| re's structure, or the scoop of Time ; | 910 |
| dimension, vast of size, | |
| an aggrandizing impulse give ; | |
| hought enthusiastic heights | |
| infuse.—But what of vast in these ? | |
| r we must own the skies forgot. | 915 |
| n art.—Vain Art ! thou pigmy power ! | |
| hou swell, and strut, with human pride, | |
| y littleness ! What childish toys, | |
| 7 columns squirted to the clouds ! | |
| d rivers and imprison'd seas ! | 920 |
| ains moulded into forms of men ! | |

Thy hundred-gated capitals ! or those
 Where three days' travel left us much to ride ;
 Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
 Arches triumphal, theatres immense, 9
 Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air !
 Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way !
 Yet these affect us in no common kind :
 What then the force of such superior scenes ?
 Enter a temple, it will strike an awe : 9
 What awe from this the Deity has built ?
 A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives :
 The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise.
 In a bright mirror His own hands have made,
 Here we see something like the face of God. 1
 Seems it not then enough to say, Lorenzo,
 To man abandon'd, ' Hast thou seen the skies ?'

And yet, so thwarted Nature's kind design
 By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
 (That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
 To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
 Celestial Art's intent. The trembling stars
 See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom
 With front erect, that hide their head by day,
 And making night still darker by their deeds.
 Slumbering in covert, till the shades descend,
 Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
 The miser earths his treasure ; and the thief,
 Watching the mole, half beggars him ere morn.
 Now plots and foul conspiracies awake,
 And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
 Havock and devastation they prepare,
 And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood.
 Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
 What shall I do ?—suppress it ? or proclaim ?—
 Why sleeps the thunder ? Now, Lorenzo ! now
 His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men.

THE CONSOLATION.

235

air crimes bare to these chaste eyes of heaven,
ink and shudder at a mortal's sight. 961

noon and stars for villains only made,
le, yet screen them, with tenebrious light ?

ey were made to fashion the sublime
an hearts, and wiser make the wise. 965

e ends were answer'd once, when mortals lived
nger wing, of aquiline ascent,

ry sublime. O how unlike
vermin of the night, this moment sung,

awl on earth, and on her venom feed ! 970

ncient sages, human stars ! they met
rothers of the skies at midnight hour,

ounsel ask'd, and what they ask'd obey'd.
agirite, and Plato, he who drank

isoned bowl, and he of Tusculum, 975

im of Corduba, (immortal names !)
e unbounded and Elysian walks,

a fit for gods and godlike men,
ook their nightly round, through radiant paths,

aphs trod ; instructed, chiefly, thus, 980

d in their bright footsteps here below,
k in worth still brighter than the skies.

hey contracted their contempt of earth ;
as eternal kindled there the fire ;

as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew 985

visitants !) more intimate with God,
orth to men, more joyous to themselves.

gh various virtues they, with ardour, ran
diac of their learn'd illustrious lives.

hristian hearts, O for a Pagan zeal ! 990

ful, but opprobrious prayer ! as much
dour less, as greater is our light.

onstrous this in morals ! Scarce more strange
this phenomenon in nature strike,

that froze us, or a star that warm'd. 995

t taught these heroes of the moral world ?
e thou givest thy praise, give credit too.

These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee,
 And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,
 That narrow views betray to misery ; 1000
 That wise it is to comprehend the whole ;
 That virtue rose from Nature ; ponder'd well,
 The single base of virtue built to Heaven ;
 That God and Nature our attention claim ;
 That Nature is the glass reflecting God, 1005
 As, by the sea, reflected is the sun,
 Too glorious to be gazed on in his sphere ;
 That mind immortal loves immortal aims ;
 That boundless mind affects a boundless space ;
 That vast surveys, and the sublime of things, 1010
 The soul assimilate, and make her great ;
 That, therefore, heaven her glories, as a fund
 Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.

Such are their doctrines ; such the Night inspired.

And what more true ? what truth of greater weight ?

The soul of man was made to walk the skies, 1016
 Delightful outlet of her prison here !

There, disencumber'd from her chains, the ties
 Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;
 There freely can respire, dilate, extend, 1020

In full proportion let loose all her powers,
 And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
 Nor as a stranger does she wander there,
 But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays ;
 Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own ; 1025
 Dives deep in their economy divine,
 Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
 And, like a master, judges not amiss.

Hence greatly pleased, and justly proud, the soul
 Grows conscious of her birth celestial ; breathes 1030
 More life, more vigour, in her native air,
 And feels herself at home among the stars,
 And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo ?—
 As earth the body, since the skies sustain 1035

The soul with food that gives immortal life,
Call it the noble pasture of the mind,
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
And riots through the luxuries of thought.

Call it the garden of the Deity, 1040
Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.

Call it the breast-plate of the true High-priest,
Ardent with gems oracular, that give
In points of highest moment, right response ; 1045
And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus have we found a true astrology ;
Thus have we found a new and noble sense,
In which alone stars govern human fates.
O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall 1050
Bloodshed and havoc on embattled realms,
And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt !
Bourbon ! this wish how generous in a foe ?

Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
And stick thy deathless name among the stars, 1055
For mighty conquests on a needle's point ?

Instead of forging chains for foreigners ;
Bastile, thy tutor ; grandeur, all thy aim ?
And yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,
How glorious, then appears the mind of man, 1060
When in it all the stars and planets roll !

And what it seems, it is. Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge ;
Those still more godlike as these more divine.

And more divine than these, thou canst not see.
Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught 1066
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end !
An Eden this ! a Paradise unlost !

I meet the Deity in every view, 1070
And tremble at my nakedness before him !

*O that I could but reach the tree of life !
For here it grows unguarded from our taste ;*

No flaming sword denies our entrance here :
Would man but gather, he might live for ever. 1075

Lorenzo ! much of moral hast thou seen :
Of curious arts art thou more fond ? then mark
The mathematic glories of the skies,
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance and Fate, 1080
Are left to finish his aerial towers ;

Wisdom and Choice, their well known characters
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own.
Though splendid all, no splendour void of use.

Use rivals beauty, art contends with power ; 1085
No wanton waste amid effuse expense,
The great Economist adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.

How rich the prospect ! and for ever new ;
And nearest, to the man that views it most ; 1090
For newer still in infinite succeeds.

Then these aerial racers, O how swift !
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string ;
Spirit alone can distance the career,
Orb above orb ascending, without end ! 1095

Circle in circle, without end, enclosed !
Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel, like to thine !
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream ;
Though seen, we labour to believe it true !

What involution ! what extent ! what swarms 1100
Of worlds, that laugh at earth ! immensely great !

Immensely distant from each other's spheres ! [roll ?

What, then, the wondrous space through which they
At once it quite ingulfs all human thought ;
'Tis Comprehension's absolute defeat. 1105

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here :
Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,
Arrangement neat and chastest order reign.

The path prescribed, inviolably kept,
Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind. 1110

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nots are tied ! how soon are they dissolved,
 the seeming married planets free !
 ove for ever, without error rove ;
 on unconfused ! nor less admire 1115
 mult untamultuous ; all on wing !
 on all ! yet what profound repose !
 orvid action, yet no noise ! as awed
 ace by the presence of their Lord ;
 id by his command, in love to man, 1120
 let fall soft beams on human rest,
 s themselves. On yon cerulean plain,
 tation to their God and thine,
 ance, they sing eternal jubilee,
 celebration of his praise ! 1125
 ce their song arrives not at our ear,
 ance perplex'd exhibits to the sight
 roglyphic of his peerless power.
 ow the labyrinthian turns they take,
 cles intricate, and mystic maze, 1130
 the grand cipher of Omnipotence ;
 s how great ! how legible to man !
 es so much wonder greater wonder still !
 are the pillars that support the skies ?
 ore than Atlantean shoulder props 1135
 cumbent load ? what magic, what strange art,
 air these ponderous orbs sustains ?
 ould not think them hang in golden chains ?—
 they are ; in the high will of Heaven,
 fixes all ; makes adamant of air, 1140
 of adamant ; makes all of nought,
 ght of all, if such the dread decree.
 ine from their deep foundations torn
 et gigantic sons of earth, the broad
 vering Alps, all toss'd into the sea ; 1145
 ght as down, or volatile as air,
 ulks enormous dancing on the waves,
 and measure exquisite ; while all
 ds, in emulation of the spheres,

Tune their sonorous instruments aloft 1150

The concert swell, and animate the ball.

Would this appear amazing?—what then worlds

In a far thinner element sustain'd,

And acting the same part with greater skill,

More rapid movement, and for noblest ends? 1155

More obvious ends to pass, are not these stars

The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,

On which angelic delegates of Heaven,

At certain periods, as the Sovereign nods,

Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love, 1160

To clothe in outward grandeur grand design,

And acts more solemn still more solemnize?

Ye citizens of air! what ardent thanks,

What full effusion of the grateful heart,

Is due from man, indulged in such a sight! 1165

A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!

It drops new truths at every new survey!

Feels not Lorenzo something stir within,

That sweeps away all period? As these spheres

Measure duration, they no less inspire 1170

The godlike hope of ages without end.

The boundless space, through which these rovers take

Their restless roam, suggests the sister thought

Of boundless time. Thus, by kind Nature's skill,

To man unlabour'd, that important guest, 1175

Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;

And an eternity for man ordain'd,

Or these his destined midnight counsellors,

The stars had never whisper'd it to man.

Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons: 1180

Could she, then, kindle the most ardent wish

To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy!

Thus of thy creed a second article,

Momentous as the existence of a God,

Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought, 1185

And then must read the soul immortal here

want the gilt, illuminated roof,
 calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
 nblies?—this is one divinely bright; 1190
 , unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
 e through the fairest, and the Sultan scorn.
 vise as thou, no Crescent holds so fair
 at which on his turban awes a world,
 thinks the Moon is proud to copy him. 1195
 on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
 nd superior to the charms of power
 , muffled in delusions of this life!
 yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed
 side to side in constant ebb and flow, 1200
 purify from stench his watery realms?
 fails her moral influence? wants she power
 rn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought
 stagnating on earth's infected shore,
 purge from nuisance his corrupted heart? 1205
 her attraction, when it draws to Heaven?
 and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joy?
 ls elevate, and panting for unseen,
 defecate from sense, alone obtain
 relish of existence undeflower'd, 1210
 life of life, the zest of worldly bliss;
 lse on earth amounts—to what? to this:
 l to be suffer'd. blessings to be left:
 h's richest inventory boasts no more.
 f higher scenes be then the call obey'd. 1215
 t me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
 t me think!—thought, too, is wilder'd here;
 idway flight Imagination tires;
 soon reprunes her wing to soar anew,
 point unable to forbear or gain; 1220
 reat the pleasure, so profound the plan
 inquiet this, where men and angels meet,
 the same manna, mingle Earth and Heaven.
 distant some of these nocturnal suns
 stant (says the sage) 'twere not absurd 1225

To doubt if beams, set out at Nature's birth,
 Are yet arrived at this so foreign world,
 Though nothing half so rapid as their flight.
 An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
 And roll for ever. Who can satiate sight 12
 In such a scene? in such an ocean wide
 Of deep astonishment? where depth, height, breadth
 Are lost in their extremes; and where to count
 The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
 Perhaps a seraph's computation fails. 13
 Now go, Ambition! boast thy boundless might
 In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.

And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles,
 To give his tottering faith a solid base.
 Why call for less than is already thine? 14
 Thou art no novice in theology;
 What is a miracle?—'Tis a reproach,
 'Tis an implicit satire on mankind,
 And while it satisfies, it censures too.
 To common sense great Nature's course proclaims
 A Deity: When mankind falls asleep, 1
 A miracle is sent as an alarm
 To wake the world, and prove him o'er again,
 By recent argument, but not more strong.
 Say which imports more plenitude of power, 1
 Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
 To make a Sun, or stop his mid career?
 To countermand his orders, and send back
 The flaming courier to the frightened East,
 Warm'd and astonish'd at his evening ray; 1
 Or bid the Moon, as with her journey tired,
 In Ajalon's soft flowery vale repose?
 Great things are these? still greater to create.
 From Adam's bower look down through the whole t
 Of miracles;—resistless is their power? 1
 They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,
If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen,

If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but spangles here ; the fool, no more.
Say'at thou, ' The course of Nature governs all ? ' 1266
The course of Nature is the Art of God.

The miracles, thou call'st for, this attest :
For say, could Nature Nature's course control ?

But, miracles apart, who sees him not 1270
Nature's Controller, Author, Guido, and End ?
Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,
But must inquire—' What hand behind the scene,
What arm Almighty, put these wheeling globes
In motion, and wound up the vast machine ? ' 1275

Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs ?
Who bowl'd them flaming through the dark profound,
Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,
Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
And set the bosom of old Night on fire, 1280
Peopled her desert, and made Horror smile ?

Or if the military style delights thee,
(For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man)

' Who marshals this bright host ? enrolls their names,
Appoints their post, their marches, and returns, 1285
Punctual, at stated periods ? who disbands

These veteran troops, their final duty done,
If e'er disbanded ? '—He, whose potent word,
Like the loud trumpet, levied first their powers
In Night's inglorious empire, where they slept 1290

In beds of darkness ; arm'd them with fierce flames ;
Arranged, and disciplined, and clothed in gold,
And call'd them out of Chaos to the field,
Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.

O let us join this army ! joining these 1295

Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour
When brighter flames shall cut a darker night ;
When these strong demonstrations of a God
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
And one eternal curtain cover all ! 1300

Struck at that thought, as new-awaked, I lift

A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars
 To man still more propitious, and their aid
 (Though guiltless of idolatry) implore,
 Nor longer rob them of their noblest name. 130
 O ye dividers of my time ! ye bright
 Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
 In your fair calendar distinctly mark'd !
 Since that authentic, radiant register, 130
 Though man inspects it not, stands good against him
 Since you and years roll on, though man stands still,
 Teach me my days to number, and apply
 My trembling heart to wisdom, now beyond
 All shadow of excuse for fooling on.
 Age smooths our path to prudence ; sweeps aside 131
 The snares keen appetite and passion spread
 To catch stray souls ; and woe to that gray head
 Whose folly would undo what age has done !
 Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars !—Much rather Thou,
 Great Artist ! Thou whose finger set aright 132
 This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,
 Though interwolved, exact ; and pointing out
 Life's rapid and irrevocable flight,
 With such an index fair as none can miss
 Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is closed. 13
 Open mine eye, dread Deity ! to read
 The tacit doctrine of thy works ; to see
 Things as they are, unalter'd through the glass
 Of worldly wishes. Time, Eternity !
 ('Tis these, mismeasured, ruin all mankind) 13
 Set them before me ; let me lay them both
 In equal scale, and learn their various weight.
 Let time appear a moment, as it is ;
 And let Eternity's full orb, at once,
 Turn on my soul, and strike it into Heaven. 13
 When shall I see far more than charms me now
 Gaze on Creation's model in thy breast
 Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more . .
 When this vile, foreign dust, which smothers all

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That travel earth's deep vale, shall I shake off? 1340
When shall my soul her incarnation quit,
And, readopted to thy bless'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheosis in thee?—

Dost think, Lorenzo, this is wandering wide?
No; 'tis directly striking at the mark. 1345

To wake thy dead devotion was my point;
And how I bless Night's consecrating shades,
Which to a temple turn a universe;
Fill us with great ideas, full of heaven,
And antidote the pestilential earth! 1350

In every storm, that either frowns or falls,
What an asylum has the soul in prayer!
And what a fane is this, in which to pray!
And what a God must dwell in such a fane!
O what a genius must inform the skies! 1355
And is Lorenzo's salamander heart

Cold, and untouch'd, amid these sacred fires?
O ye nocturnal sparks! ye glowing embers,
On Heaven's broad hearth! Who burn, or burn no more,
Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath 1360
Or blows you or forbears, assist my song!
Pour your whole influence; exercise his heart,
So long possess'd, and bring him back to man.

And is Lorenzo a demurrer still?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest 1365

Truths which, contested, put thy parts to shame:
Nor shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart,
A faithless heart, how despicably small!
Too straight, aught great or generous to receive!
Fill'd with an atom! fill'd and foul'd with self! 1370
And self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!

Instincts and passions of the nobler kind
Lie suffocated there; or they alone,
Reason apart, would wake high hope, and open,
To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere, 1375
Where Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,
Their endless miracles of love display,

And promise all the truly great desire.
 'The mind that would be happy must be great ;
 Great in its wishes, great in its surveys. 1380

Extended views a narrow mind extend,
 Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
 Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.
 A man of compass makes a man of worth :
 Divine contemplate, and become divine ! 1385

As man was made for glory and for bliss,
 All littleness is an approach to woe.
 Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
 And let in manhood ; let in happiness ;
 Admit the boundless theatre of thought. 1390

From nothing, up to God ; which makes a man.
 'Take God from Nature, nothing great is left ;
 Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees ;
 Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
 Emerge from thy profound ; erect thine eye ; 1395

See thy distress ! how close art thou besieged !
 Besieged by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe !
 Enclosed by these innumerable worlds,
 Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
 As in a golden net of Providence, 1400

How art thou caught, sure captive of belief :
 From this thy bless'd captivity what art,
 What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free !
 'This scene is Heaven's indulgent violence ;
 Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory ? 1405

What is earth, bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
 But faith in God imposed, and press'd on man ?
 Darest thou still litigate thy desperate cause,
 Spite of these numerous, awful witnesses,
 And doubt the deposition of the skies ? 1410

O how laborious is thy way to ruin !

Laborious ? 'tis impracticable quite :

To sink beyond a doubt in this debate,

With all his weight of wisdom and of will,

And crime flagitious, I defy a fool. 1415

Some wish they did, but no man disbelieves.
 ' God is a Spirit ; spirit cannot strike
 These gross material organs ; God by man
 As much is seen, as man a God can see.
 In these astonishing exploits of power, 1420
 What order, beauty, motion, distance, size !
 Concertion of design, how exquisite !
 How complicate in their divine police !
 Apt means ! great ends ! consent to general good !—
 Each attribute of these material gods, 1425
 So long (and that with specious pleas) adored,
 A separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,
 And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.
 Lorenzo ! this may seem harangue to thee ;
 Such all is apt to seem, that thwarts our will. 1430
 And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof
 Of this great master-moral of the skies,
 Unskill'd, or disinclin'd, to read it there ?
 Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,
 Take it in one compact, unbroken chain. 1435
 Such proof insists on an attentive ear,
 'Twill not make ope amid a mob of thoughts,
 And for thy notice struggle with the world.
 Retire;—the world shut out;—thy thoughts call home;—
 Imagination's airy wing repress ;— 1440
 Lock up thy senses ;—let no passion stir ;—
 Wake all to Reason ;—let her reign alone ,—
 Then in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth
 Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,
 As I have done, and shall inquire no more. 1445
 In Nature's channel thus the questions run :
 ' What am I ? and from whence ?—I nothing know
 But that I am ; and since I am, conclude
 Something eternal ; had there e'er been nought,
 Nought still had been : eternal there must be.— 1450
 But what eternal ?—Why not human race ?
 And Adam's ancestors without an end ?—
 That's hard to be conceived, since every link

Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail.
 Can every part depend, and not the whole? 14
 Yet grant it true, new difficulties rise ;
 I'm still quite out at sea, nor see the shore.
 Whence earth, and these bright orbs ?—Eternal too
 Grant matter was eternal, still these orbs
 Would want some other father ;—much design 1
 Is seen in all their motions, all their makes.
 Design implies intelligence and art ;
 That can't be from themselves—or man : that art
 Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow ?
 And nothing greater yet allow'd, than man.— 1
 Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
 Shot through vast masses of enormous weight ?
 Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume
 Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly ?
 Has matter innate motion ? then each atom, 1
 Asserting its indisputable right
 To dance, would form a universe of dust :
 Has matter none ? then whence these glorious fort
 And boundless flights, from shapeless and reposed
 Has matter more than motion ? has it thought, 1
 Judgment, and genius ? is it deeply learn'd
 In mathematics ? has it framed such laws,
 Which, but to guess, a Newton made immortal ?—
 If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,
 Who think a clod inferior to a man !
 If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
 And that with greater far than human skill,
 Resides not in each block,—a Godhead reigns !—
 Grant, then, invisible, eternal Mind ;
 That granted, all is solved :—but granting that,
 Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud ?
 Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive ?
 A being without origin or end !—
 Hail, human Liberty ! there is no God—
 Yet why ? on either scheme that not subsists :

last, how many knots beside,
 ble all?—why choose it there
 chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
 where, that chosen, all the rest 1495
 d, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?—
 ot Reason's dictate; Reason says,
 th the side where one grain turns the scale:
 st preponderance is here! can Reason
 der voice exclaim—"Believe a God?" 1500
 son heard, is the sole mark of man.
 ngs impossible must man think true,
 thor system! and how strange
 iever, through mere credulity!
 his chain Lorenzo finds no flaw, 1505
 ever bind him to belief.
 re the link, in which a flaw he finds?
 God there is, that God how great!
 at that Power whose providential care
 these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray!
 e universal threads the whole! 1511
 s Creation, like a precious gem,
 ittle, on the footstool of his throne!
 ttle gem, how large! A weight let fall
 x'd star, in ages can it reach 1515
 unt earth? Say, then, Lorenzo! where,
 ads this mighty building? where begin
 rbs of Creation? where the wall
 ttlements look o'er into the vale
 istence? Nothing's strange abode! 1520
 hat point of space Jehovah dropp'd
 en'd line, and laid his balance by;
 worlds, and measured infinite no more?
 are his terminating pillar high
 undane head? and says to gods, 1525
 ters illustrious as the Sun,
 the plan's proud period; I pronounce
 : accomplish'd; the Creation closed:
 ye Gods! nor shout, ye Gods, alone;

Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life, 1530
 That rests, or rolls; ye Heights and Depths, resound!
 Resound! resound! ye Depths and Heights, resound!"

Hard are those questions?—answer harder still.

Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,
 The solitary son of Power Divine? 1535

Or has the' Almighty Father, with a breath,
 Impregnated the womb of distant Space?

Has he not bid, in various provinces,
 Brother creations the dark bowels burst
 Of Night primeval, barren now no more? 1540

And He, the central Sun, transpiercing all
 Those giant generations, which disport
 And dance, as motes, in his meridian ray;
 That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd
 In that abyss of horror whence they sprung; 1545
 While Chaos triumphs, repossess'd of all
 Rival Creation ravish'd from his throne?

Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave! [wide?

Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too
 Is this extravagant?—No; this is just; 1550

Just in conjecture, though 'twere false in fact.

If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung
 From noble root, high thought of the Most High.
 But wherefore error? who can prove it such?—

He that can set Omnipotence a bound. 1555

Can man conceive beyond what God can do?

Nothing, but quite impossible, is hard.

He summons into being, with like ease,

A whole creation, and a single grain.

Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born! 1560

A thousand worlds! there's space for millions more;

And in what space can his great fiat fail?

Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge

The warm imagination: why condemn?

Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts
 With fuller admiration of that Power

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Why not indulge in his augmented praise ?

Darts not his glory a still brighter ray,

The less is left to Chaos, and the realms 1570

Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays aghast,

And, though most talkative, makes no report ?

Still seems my thought enormous ? think again ;—

Experience 'self shall aid thy lame belief.

Glasses, (that revelation to the sight !) 1575

Have they not led us in the deep disclose

Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,

And, though demonstrated, still ill conceived ?

If, then, on the reverse the mind would mount

In magnitude, what mind can mount too far, 1580

To keep the balance, and creation poise ?

Defect alone can err on such a theme :

What is too great, if we the cause survey ?

Stupendous Architect ! Thou, Thou, art all !

My soul flies up and down in thoughts of Thee, 1585

And finds herself but at the centre still !

I AM, thy name ' existence, all thine own !

Creation's nothing, flatter'd much, if styled

' The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.'

O for the voice—of what ? of whom ?—what voice

Can answer to my wants, in such ascent 1591

As dares to deem one universe too small ?

Tell me, Lorenzo ! (for now Fancy glows,

Fired in the vortex of almighty power)

Is not this home-creation, in the map 1595

Of universal Nature, as a speck,

Like fair Britannia in our little ball ;

Exceeding fair and glorious, for its size,

But, elsewhere, far outmeasured, far outshone ?

In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies) 1600

Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost

Too small for notice in the vast of being ;

Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space

From other realms ; from ample continents

Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell ; 1605

Less northern, less remote from Deity.
 Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme,
 Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth
 Luxuriant growths, nor the late autumn wait
 Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown Fancy in such depths as these
 Return, presumptuous rover! and confess
 The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too small
 Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?
 Full ample the dominions of the Sun!
 Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
 The matchless monarch from his flaming throne
 Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
 Farther and faster than a thought can fly,
 And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
 This Heliopolis by greater far
 Than the proud tyrant of the Nile was built;
 And He alone who built it can destroy.
 Beyond this city why strays human thought?
 One wonderful, enough for man to know!
 One infinite, enough for man to range!
 One firmament, enough for man to read!
 O what voluminous instruction here!
 What page of wisdom is denied him? none,
 If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
 Nor is instruction here our only gain:
 There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
 Which warms our passions, proselytes our hear
 How eloquently shines the glowing pole!
 With what authority it gives its charge,
 Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
 Though silent, loud! heard earth around; ~~and~~
 The planets heard; ~~and not unheard in Hell!~~
 Hell has her wonder; though too proud to praise
 Is earth, then, more infernal? has she those
 Who neither praise (Lorenzo!) nor admire?
 Lorenzo's admiration, preengaged,
~~Has~~ *er* ask'd the Moon one question? never

THE CONSOLATION

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correspondence with a single star ;
 d an altar to the queen of heaven 1045
 brightness, or her train adored.
 many rivals have long since
 his whole devotion ; stars malign,
 le the fond astronomer run mad,
 intellect, corrupt his heart ; 1650
 to sacrifice his fame and peace
 lary madness, call'd delight :
 re gross, than ever kiss'd
 and to Luna, or pour'd out
 o Jove !—O Thou, to whom belongs 1655
 : ! O Thou great Jove unfeign'd !
 ructer ! Thy first volume this
 erusal ; all in capitals !
 d stars (Heaven's golden alphabet !)
 o seize the sight, who runs may read ; 1660
 can understand. 'Tis unconfined
 n land or Jewry ; fairly writ,
 , universal, to mankind ;
 lofty to the learn'd, yet plain
 at feed the flock, or guide the plough, 1665
 husk strike out the bounding grain :
 worthy the great Mind that speaks !
 comment to the sacred page !
 offers its reader to the skies,
 using his first lesson there, 1670
 ire 'self a fragment, that unread.
 book of wisdom to the wise !
 book ! and open'd, Night ! by thee.
 uch open'd, I confess, O Night !
 wish ; but how shall I prevail ? 1075
 Night ! whose modest, maiden beams
 ew Creation, and present
 great picture soften'd to the sight ;
 far, far more indulgent still,
 hose mild dominion's silver key 1080
 hemisphere, and sets to view

Worlds beyond number ; worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud and envious star of noon !

Canst thou not draw a deeper scene,—and show
The Mighty Potentate to whom belong 1686

These rich regalia, pompously display'd
To kindle that high hope ? Like him of Uz,

I gaze around, I search on every side—
O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores !

As the chased hart, amid the desert waste, 1690
Pants for the living stream ; for Him who made her

So pants the thirsty soul, amid the blank
Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess ! where ?

Where blazes his bright court ? where burns his throne ?
Thou know'st, for thou art near Him ; by thee, round

His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports 1696
The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none

Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
Who travel far, discover where he dwells ?

A star his dwelling pointed out below. 1700
Ye Pleyades ! Arcturus ! Mazaroth !

And thou, Orion ! of still keener eye !

Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
And bring them out of tempest into port !

On which hand must I bend my course to find him ?

'These courtiers keep the secret of their king ; 1706

I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them

I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale

From sphere to sphere, the steps by Nature set

For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid ; 1710

To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought,

Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

In ardent Contemplation's rapid car,

From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.

How swift I mount ; diminish'd earth recedes : 1715

I pass the moon ; and, from her farther side,

Pierce Heaven's blue curtain ; strike into remote ;

*Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage
His artificial airy journey takes,*

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celestial lengthens human sight. 1720
 at every planet on my road,
 for Him who gives their orbs to roll,
 reheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring,
 of earths an army might be lost,
 bold comet take my bolder flight. 1725
 these sovereign glories of the skies,
 endent, native lustre proud ;
 s of systems ! and the lords of life,
 their wide empires !—What behold I now ?
 ness of wonder burning round, 1730
 rger suns inhabit higher spheres ;
 the villas of descending gods ;
 I here ; my toil is but begun ;
 the threshold of the Deity ;
 eneath it, I am groveling still. 1735
 strange ; I built on a mistake :
 idear of his works, whence Folly sought
 to Reason sets His glory higher ;
 It thus high for worms (mere worms to Him)
 , Lorenzo, must the builder dwell ? 1740
 then, and, for a moment, here respire—
 a thought can keep its station here.
 m I ?—where is earth ?—nay, where art thou,
 —Is the Sun turn'd recluse ?—and are
 ted expeditions short to mine ?— 1745
 how short ! On Nature's Alps I stand,
 a thousand firmaments beneath !
 nd systems ! as a thousand grains !
 a stranger, and so late arrived,
 man's curious spirit not inquire 1750
 s the natives of this world sublime,
 o foreign, unterrestrial sphere,
 mortal, untranslated, never stray'd ?
 as distant from my little home
 st sunbeams in an age can fly ; 1755
 my native element I roam,
 f new and wonderful to man.

What province this, of his immense domain,
 Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
 Ye borderers on the coasts of bliss! what are you?
 A colony from Heaven? or only raised, 1761
 By frequent visit from Heaven's neighbouring realms,
 To secondary gods, and half divine?—
 Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,
 Far other life you live, far other tongue 1763
 You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
 Than man. How various are the works of God!
 But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthroned,
 And absolute? or Sense in arms against her?
 Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd? 1770
 Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
 And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?
 Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,
 And ask their Adams—'Who would not be wise?'
 Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd? 1775
 And, if redeem'd—is your Redeemer scorn'd?
 Is this your final residence? if not,
 Change you your scene translated, or by death?
 And if by death, what death?—Know you disease?
 Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour, 1780
 Europa groans (so call we a small field
 Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death deputed
 Intemperance to do the work of Age,
 And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
 As slow of execution, for despatch 1785
 Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
 Their sheep (the silly sheep they fleeced before,)
 And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal.
 Sit all your executioners on thrones?
 With you, can rage for plunder make a god? 1790
 And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—
 But you, perhaps, can't bleed: from matter gross
 Your spirits clean are delicately clad
 In finespun other, privileged to soar,
 Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike

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The lot of man! how few of human race
 By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
 Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day
 Of hardy conflict o'er? or are you still
 Raw candidates at school? and have you those 1807
 Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—
 But what are we? you never heard of man,
 Or earth, the bedlam of the universe!
 Where Reason (undiseased with you) runs mad.
 And nurses Folly's children as her own, 1808
 Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
 Of Holiness, where Reason is pronounced
 Infallible, and thunders like a god,
 E'en there, by saints the demons are outdone;
 What these think wrong, our saints refine to right;
 And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts; 1811
 Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—
 But this how strange to you, who know not man!
 Has the least rumour of our race arrived?
 Call'd here Elijah in his flaming car? 1815
 Pass'd by you the good Enoch, on his road
 To those fair fields whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
 Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere in his descent,
 Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall
 A short eclipse from his portentous shade? 1820
 O that the fiend had lodg'd on some broad orb
 Athwart his way; nor reach'd his present home,
 Then blacken'd earth, with footsteps foul'd in Hell,
 Nor wash'd in ocean, as from Rome he pass'd
 To Britain's isle; too, too conspicuous there.' 1825
 But this is all digression: where is He
 That o'er Heaven's battlements the felon hurl'd
 To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is He
 Who sees Creation's summit in'a vale?
 He whom, while man is man, he can't but seek, 1830
 And if he finds, commences more than man?
 O for a telescope his throne to reach!
 Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or bless'd above!

e searching, ye Newtonian angels ! tell
 Where your Great Master's orb ! his planets where ?
 those conscious satellites, those morning stars, 1836
 first-born of Deity ! from central love,
 y veneration most profound, thrown off ;
 y sweet attraction no less strongly drawn ;
 wed, and yet raptured ; raptured, yet serene ; 1840
 ast thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams ;
 still approaching circles still remote,
 evolving round the Sun's eternal Sire ?
 r sent, in lines direct, on embassies
 o nations—in what latitude ?—beyond 1845
 errestrial thought's horizon !—and on what
 igh errands sent ?—Here human effort ends,
 nd leaves me still a stranger to his throne.
 Full well it might ! I quite mistook my road ;
 orn in an age more curious than devout, 1850
 ore fond to fix the place of heaven or hell,
 han studious this to shun, or that secure.
 'is not the curious, but the pious, path
 hat leads me to my point. Lorenzo ! know,
 'ithout or star or angel for their guide, 1855
 'ho worship God shall find him. Humble Love,
 nd not proud Reason, keeps the door of heaven ;
 ove finds admission where proud Science fails.
 an's science is the culture of his heart,
 nd not to lose his plummet in the depths 1860
 f Nature, or the more profound of God :
 ther to know, is an attempt that sets
 ne wisest on a level with the fool.
 o fathom Nature (ill attempted here !)
 st doubt, is deep philosophy above ; 1865
 gher degrees in bliss archangels take,
 deeper learn'd, the deepest learning still.
 what a thunder of Omnipotence
 might I dare to speak) is seen in all !
 an ! in earth ! in more amazing skies ! 1870
 hing this lesson Pride is loath to learn—

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Deeply to discern, not much to know,
 And was born to wonder and adore !'
 Is there cause for higher wonder still
 That which struck us from our past surveys ?—
 And for deeper adoration too. 1876
 My late airy travel unconfined,
 [Learn'd nothing ?—Yes, Lorenzo ! this :
 Of these stars is a religious house ;
 Their altars smoke, their incense rise, 1880
 And hosannas ring through every sphere,
 Nary fraught with future gods.
 All o'er is consecrated ground,
 And with growths immortal and divine.
 Great Proprietor's all bounteous hand 1885
 Nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields
 Seeds of Reason, which to virtues rise
 In his genial ray ; and, if escaped
 Stilential blasts of stubborn will,
 Grown mature, are gather'd for the skies. 1890
 Devotion thought too much on earth,
 Beings, so superior, homage boast,
 Triumph in prostrations to the throne ?
 Wherefore more of planets or of stars ?
 All journeys, and, discover'd there, 1895
 A thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,
 Are sending incense to the throne,
 The bold Lorenzos of our sphere !
 And the solemn sources of my soul,
 Have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus, 1900
 Ring numbers o'er the flaming skies,
 Of fancy or of fact what more
 The Muse—here turn we, and review
 His'd nocturnal landscape wide ; then say,
 Ah, Lorenzo ! with what burst of heart, 1905
 O'er, at once, revolving in his thought,
 An exclaim, adoring and aghast ?
 A root ! O what a branch, is here !
 Father ! what a family !

Worlds! systems! and creations!—and creations, 1910
 In one agglomerated cluster, hung,
 Great Vine!* on thee; on thee the cluster hangs,
 The filial cluster! infinitely spread

In glowing globes, with various being fraught,
 And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life. 1915
 Or, shall I say (for who can say enough?)

A constellation of ten thousand gems,
 (And, O! of what dimension! of what weight!)
 Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
 Of Majesty divine! The blazing seal, 1920
 That deeply stamps, on all created mind,
 Indelible, his sovereign attributes,

Omnipotence and Love! that passing bound,
 And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here
 For want of power in God, but thought in man. 1925
 E'en this acknowledged, leaves us still in debt;
 If greater aught, that greater all is thine,
 Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of Thee,
 And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
 In which archangels might have fail'd, unblamed.'

How such ideas of the' Almighty's power, 1931
 And such ideas of the' Almighty's plan,
 (Ideas not absurd) distend the thought
 Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
 The fulness of the Doity breaks forth 1935
 In inconceivables, to men and gods.

Think, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought
 How low must man descend when gods adore!
 Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast?
 Did I not tell thee 'We would mount, Lorenzo! 1940
 And kindle our devotion at the stars?'

And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?

And art all adamant? and dost confute,
 All urged, with one irrefragable smile?

Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here! 1945

Swear by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,

* John xv. 1.

THE CONSOLATION.

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Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they ;
 Then thou, like them, shalt shine : like them, shalt rise
 From low to lofty, from obscure to bright,
 By due gradation, Nature's sacred law. 1950

The stars from whence ?—ask Chaos—he can tell.

Those bright temptations to idolatry
 From darkness and confusion took their birth ;
 Sons of deformity ! from fluid dregs

Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude, 1955

And then to spheres opaque ; then dimly shone,
 Then brighten'd ; then blazed out in perfect day.

Nature delights in progress, in advance

From worse to better ; but when minds ascend,
 Progress, in part, depends upon themselves. 1960

Heaven aids exertion : greater makes the great ;

The voluntary little lessens more.

O be a man ! and thou shalt be a god !

And half self-made !—ambition how divine !

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone ! 1965

Still undevout ? unkindled ?—though high taught,

Schdol'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars,

Rank coward to the fashionable world !

Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heaven ?

Cursed fume of pride, exhaled from deepest hell !

Pride in religion is man's highest praise. 1971

Bent on destruction ! and in love with death !

Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once,

Were half so sad as one benighted mind,

Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair. 1975

How like a widow in her weeds, the Night,

Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits !

How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps

Perpetual dews, and saddens Nature's scene !

A scene more sad Sin makes the darken'd soul, 1980

All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Though blind of heart, still open is thine eye.

Why such magnificence in all thou seest ?

'f matter's grandeur, know one end is this,

To tell the rational, who gazes on it,—

1985

‘ Though that immensely great, still greater he
Whose breast capricious, can embrace and lodge,
Unburden’d, Nature’s universal scheme ;

Can grasp Creation with a single thought ;

Creation grasp, and not exclude its Sire.’—

1990

To tell him farther—‘ It behoves him much
To guard the’ important, yet depending fate
Of being brighter than a thousand suns ;

One single ray of thought outshines them all.’—

And if man hears obedient, soon he’ll soar

1995

Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedropp’d with eyes of gold,
Rising, where thought is now denied to rise,
Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist ?—no mortal ever lived

2000

But, dying, he pronounced (when words are true)

The whole that charms thee absolutely vain ;

Vain, and far worse !—Think thou with dying men ;

O condescend to think as angels think !

O tolerate a chance for happiness !

2005

Our nature such, ill choice insures ill fate ;

And hell had been, though there had been no God.

Dost thou not know, my new Astronomer !

Earth, turning from the Sun, brings night to man ?

Man, turning from his God, brings endless night ;

Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend, 2011

Amend no manners, and expect no peace.

How deep the darkness ! and the groan how loud !

And far, how far, from lambent are the flames !—

Such is Lorenzo’s purchase ! such his praise ! 2015

The proud, the politic Lorenzo’s praise ;

Though in his ear, and level’d at his heart,

I’ve half read o’er the volume of the skies.

For think not thou hast heard all this from me ;

My song but echoes what great Nature speaks. 2020

What has she spoken ?—Thus the goddess spoke,

Thus speaks for ever :—‘ Place, at Nature’s head,

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A Sovereign which o'er all things rolls his eye,
Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
But, above all, diffuses endless good ; 2025

To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly,
The vile for mercy, and the pain'd for peace ;
By whom the various tenants of these spheres,
Diversified in fortunes, place, and powers,
Raised in enjoyment, as in worth they rise, 2030

Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)
At that bless'd fountain-head from which they stream,
Where conflict past redoubles present joy,
And present joy looks forward on increase,
And that on more ; no period ! every step 2035

A double boon ! a promise and a bliss.'

How easy sits this scheme on human hearts !
It suits their make, it soothes their vast desires ;
Passion is pleased, and Reason asks no more :
'Tis rational ; 'tis great !—but what is thine ? 2040

It darkens ! shocks ! excruciates ! and confounds !

Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
Sinking from bad to worse ; few years the sport
Of Fortune, then the morsel of despair.

Say, then, Lorenzo ! (for thou know'st it well) 2045

What's vice ? mere want of compass in our thought.

Religion what ?—the proof of common sense.

How art thou hooted where the least prevails !

Is it my fault if these truths call thee fool ?

And thou shalt never be miscall'd by me. 2050

Can neither Shame nor Terror stand thy friend ?

And art thou still an insect in the mire ?

How like thy guardian angel have I flown ;

Snatch'd thee from earth, escorted thee through all

The' ethereal armies ; walk'd thee, like a god, 2055

Through splendours of first magnitude, arranged

On either hand ; clouds thrown beneath thy feet ;

Close-cruised on the bright paradise of God,

And almost introduced thee to the throne !

And art thou still carousing, for delight,

Rank poison, first fermenting to mere froth,
 And then subsiding into final gall?
 To beings of sublime, immortal make,
 How shocking is all joy whose end is sure!
 Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms!
 And dost thou choose what ends ere well begun, 20
 And infamous as short? and dost thou choose
 (Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet)
 To wade into perdition through contempt,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own? 20
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow?
 For by strong Guilt's most violent assault,
 Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.

O thou most awful being! and most vain! 20
 Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy power?
 Though dread Eternity has sown her seeds
 Of bliss and woe in thy despotic breast;
 Though heaven and hell depend upon thy choice,
 A butterfly comes cross, and both are fled. 20
 Is this the picture of a rational?
 This horrid image, shall it be more just?
 Lorenzo! no; it cannot,—shall not be,
 If there is force in reason; or in sounds
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon, 20
 A magic, at this planetary hour,
 When Slumber locks the general lip, and dreams,
 Through senseless mazes, hunts souls uninspir'd.
 Attend—the sacred mysteries begin—
 My solemn night-born adjuration hear: 20
 Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,
 While the stars gaze on this enchantment new;
 Enchantment not infernal, but divine!
 'By Silence, Death's peculiar attribute;
 By Darkness, Guilt's inevitable doom; 20
 By Darkness and by Silence, sisters dread!
 That draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
 And raise ideas solemn as the scene!

THE CONSOLATION.

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By Night, and all of awful Night presents
 To thought or sense (of awful much, to both 2100
 The goddess brings !) By these her trembling fires.
 Like Vesta's, ever-burning, and, like hers,
 Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure !
 By these bright orators that prove and praise,
 And press thee to revere the Deity ; 2105
 Perhaps, too, aid thee, when revered, a while
 To reach his throne, as stages of the soul,
 Through which, at different periods, she shall pass,
 Refining gradual, for her final height,
 And purging off some dross at every sphere ! 2110
 By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world !
 By the world's kings and kingdoms most renown'd,
 From short Ambition's zenith set for ever,
 Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom !
 By the long list of swift mortality, 2115
 From Adam downward to this evening knell,
 Which midnight waves in Fancy's startled eye,
 And shocks her with a hundred centuries,
 Round Death's black banner throng'd in human thought
 By thousands, now, resigning their last breath, 2120
 And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear !
 By tombs o'er tombs arising, human earth
 Ejected, to make room for—human earth,
 The monarch's terror ! and the sexton's trade !
 By pompous obsequies that shun the day, 2125
 The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
 Which makes poor man's humiliation proud,
 Boast of our ruin ! triumph of our dust !
 By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones,
 And the pale lamp that shows the ghastly dead, 2130
 More ghastly through the thick incumbent gloom !
 By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
 The gliding spectre ! and the groaning grove !
 By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan
 For the grave's shelter ! By desponding men, 2135
 Senseless to pains of death from pangs of guilt !

By Guilt's last audit ! By yon moon in blood,
 The rocking firmament, the falling stars,
 And thunder's last discharge, great Nature's knell !
 By second Chaos, and eternal Night,-- 2140
 Be wise--nor let Philander blame my charm ;
 But own not ill discharged my double debt,
 Love to the living, duty to the dead.

For know I'm but executor ; he left
 This moral legacy ; I make it o'er 2145
 By his command : Philander hear in me,
 And Heaven in both.—If deaf to these, oh ! hear
 Florello's tender voice ; his weal depends
 On thy resolve ; it trembles at thy choice ;
 For his sake—love thyself : example strikes 2150
 All human hearts ; a bad example more ;
 More still a father's ; that insures his ruin.
 As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove
 The' unnatural parent of his miseries,
 And make him curse the being which thou gavest ?
 Is this the blessing of so fond a father ? 2156
 If careless of Lorenzo, spare, oh ! spare
 Florello's father, and Philander's friend !
 Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him ;
 And from Philander's friend the world expects 2160
 A conduct no dishonour to the dead.
 Let passion do what nobler motive should ;
 Let love and emulation rise in aid
 To reason, and persuade thee to be—bless'd.
 This seems not a request to be denied ; 2165
 Yet (such the' infatuation of mankind !)
 'Tis the most hopeless man can make to man.
 Shall I then rise in argument and warmth ?
 And urge Philander's posthumous advice,
 From topics yet unbroach'd ?— 2170
 But, oh ! I faint ! my spirits fail ! nor strange !
 So long on wing, and in no middle clime !
 To which my great Creator's glory call'd ;
 And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand

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Has stroked my drooping lids, and promises 2175
 My long arrear of rest : the downy god
 (Wont to return with our returning peace)
 Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose.
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger ! from the peasant's cot,
 The shipboy's hammock, or the soldier's straw, 2180
 Whence Sorrow never chased thee ; with thee bring
 Not hideous visions, as of late, but draughts
 Delicious of well tasted cordial rest,
 Man's rich restorative ; his balmy bath,
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play 2185
 The various movements of this nice machine,
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
 When tired with vain rotations of the day,
 Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn ;
 Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels, 2190
 Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends :
 When will it end with me ?

——' Thou only know'st,

Thou, whose broad eye the future and the past
 Joins to the present, making one of three 2194
 To mortal thought ! Thou know'st, and Thou alone,
 All knowing !—all unknown !—and yet well known !
 Near, though remote ! and, though unfathom'd, felt !
 And, though invisible, for ever seen !
 And seen in all ! the great and the minute :
 Each globe above, with its gigantic race, 2200
 Each flower, each leaf, with its small people swarm'd,
 (Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence !)
 To the first thought that asks ' From whence ?' declare
 Their common source : thou fountain, running o'er
 In rivers of communicated joy ! 2205
 Who gavest us speech for far, far humbler themes !
 Say by what name shall I presume to call
 Him I see burning in these countless suns,
 As Moses in the bush ? Illustrious Mind !
 'The whole creation less, far less, to Thee, 2210
 Than that to the creation's ample round,

How shall I name Thee ?—How my labouring soul
Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth !

‘ Great System of perfections ! mighty Cause
Of causes mighty ! Cause uncaused ! sole root
Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God !

First Father of effects ! that progeny
Of endless series ; where the golden chain’s
Last link admits a period, who can tell ?

Father of all that is or heard or hears !

Father of all that is or seen or sees !

Father of all that is or shall arise !

Father of this immeasurable mass

Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,

Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,

Minute or passing bound ! in each extreme

Of like amaze and mystery to man.

Father of these bright millions of the night !

Of which the least, full Godhead had proclaim’d,

And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,

Is appellation higher still thy choice ?

Father of matter’s temporary lords !

Father of spirits ! nobler offspring ! sparks

Of high paternal glory, rich endow’d

With various measures, and with various modes

Of instinct, reason, intuition ; beams

More pale or bright from day divine, to break

The dark of matter organized (the ware

Of all created spirit) beams that rise

Each over other in superior light,

Till the last ripens into lustre strong,

Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond

(Far fonder than ere bore that name on earth)

Of intellectual beings ! beings bless’d

With powers to please thee, not of passive ply

To laws they know not ; beings lodged in seats

Of well adapted joys, in different & mes

Of this imperial palace for thy sons ;

Of this proud, populous, well policied,

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h boundless habitation, plann'd by Thee ; 2250
 several clans their several climates suit,
 insposition, doubtless, would destroy.
 ! indulge, immortal King ! indulge
 less august, indeed, but more
 ing ; ah ! how sweet in human ears ! 2255
 in our ears, and triumph in our hearts !
 of immortality to man !
 ie that lately* set my soul on fire—
 ou the next ! yet equal ! thou by whom
 essing was convey'd, far more ! was bought,
 e the price ! by whom all worlds 2261
 made, and one redeem'd ! illustrious Light
 ight illustrious ! thou, whose regal power
 n time, but infinite in space,
 e than adamantine basis fix'd, 2265
 ore, far more, than diadems and thrones
 ly reigns, the dread of gods !
 ! the friend of man ! beneath whose foot,
 the mandate of whose awful nod,
 ons, revolutions, fortunes, fates, 2270
 , of low, of mind, and matter, roll
 h the short channels of expiring time,
 eless ocean of eternity,
 : tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes)
 ute subjection !—And, O Thou ! 2275
 rious Third ! distinct, not separate !
 g from both ! with both incorporate,
 range to tell !) incorporate with dust !
 lescension, as thy glory, great,
 ed in man ! of human hearts, if pure, 2280
 Inhabitant ! the tie divine
 en with distant earth ! by whom, I trust,
 nspired) uncensured this address
 e, to Them—to whom ?—mysterious power !
 i—yet unreveald'd ! darkness in light ! 2285
 in unity ! our joy ! our dread !

* See Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin !

That animates all right, the triple Sun !

Sun of the soul ! her never setting Sun !

Triune, unutterable, unconceived,

2296

Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great God !

Greater than greatest ! better than the best !

Kinder than kindest ! with soft Pity's eye,

Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,

From thy bright home, from that high firmament 2295

Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt ;

Beyond archangels' unassisted ken,

From far above what mortals highest call,

From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,

Through—what ? confounding interval ! through all,

And more, than labouring Fancy can conceive ; 2301

Through radiant ranks of essences unknown ?

Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd

Round various banners of Omnipotence,

With endless change of rapturous duties fired ; 2305

Through wondrous beings' interposing swarms,

All clustering at the call, to dwell in thee ;

Through this wide waste of worlds ! this vista vast,

All sanded o'er with suns, suns turn'd to night

Before thy feeblest beam—look down—down—down,

On a poor breathing particle in dust, 2311

Or, lower, an immortal in his crimes :

His crimes forgive ! forgive his virtues too !

Those smaller faults, half converts to the right :

Nor let me close these eyes, which never more 2315

May see the Sun (though Night's descending scale

Now weighs up Morn) unpitied and unblest !

In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain ;

Pain, our aversion ; pain, which strikes me now ;

And, since all pain is terrible to man,

2320

Though transient, terrible ; at thy good hour,

Gently, ah, gently, lay me in my bed,

My clay-cold bed ! by nature, now, so near,

By nature near, still nearer by disease !

THE CONSOLATION.

271

be this an emblem of my grave ; 2825
 outpreach the preacher ; every night
 outcry the boy at Philip's ear,
 tongue of death ! that herald of the tomb .
 en (the shelter of thy wing implored)
 ses, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose, 2830
 this truth still deeper in my soul,
 ted by my pillow, sign'd by Fate,
 Fate's volume, at the page of Man—
 s sickly soul, though turn'd and toss'd for ever
 ide to side, can rest on thought but Thee ; 2835
 a full trust, hereafter in full joy :"
 ee, the promised, sure, eternal down
 its, toil'd in travel through this vale :
 that pillow shall my soul despond ;
 ove almighty ! Love almighty ! (sing, 2840
 Creation!) Love almighty reigns !
 ath of death ! that cosdial of despair !
 nd Eternity's triumphant song !
 whom no more —fer, O thou Patron God !
 God and mortal ! thence more God to man !
 theme eternal ! man's eternal theme ! 2845
 ant not scape uninjured from our praise :
 red from our praise can he escape
 isembosom'd from the Father, bows
 aven of heavens to kiss the distant earth ! 2850
 es out in agonies a sinless soul !
 t the cross Death's iron sceptre breaks !
 amish'd Ruin plucks her human prey !
 s wide the gates celestial to his foes !
 gratitude, for such a boundless debt, 2855
 s their suffering brothers to receive !
 deep human guilt in payment fails,
 per guilt, prohibits our despair !
 s it, as our duty, to rejoice !
 oless all) omnipotently kind, 2860
 his delights among the sons of men .

† Prov. chap. viii.

What words are these—and did they come from
Heaven?

And were they spoke to man? to guilty man?

What are all mysteries to love like this?

The songs of angels, all the melodies 2365

Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;

Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,

Though plunged, before, in horrors dark as night:

Rich prelibation of consummate joy!

Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd. 2370

This final effort of the moral Muse,

How justly titled!* nor for me alone;

For all that read. What spirit of support,

What heights of Consolation crown my song!

Then farewell Night! of darkness, now, no more;

Jay breaks, shines, triumphs; 'tis eternal day! 2376

Shall that which rises out of nought complain

Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?

My soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join

The two supports of human happiness, 2380

Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,

True taste of life, and constant thought of death!

The thought of death, sole victor of its dread!

Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;

Thy patron He whose diadem has dropp'd 2385

Yon gems of heaven, eternity thy prize;

And leaves the racers of the world their own,

Their feather and their froth, for endless toils:

They part with all, for that which is not bread,

They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power, 2391

And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.

How must a spirit, late escaped from earth,

Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,

The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,

Look back, astonish'd on the ways of man, 2395

Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!

And when our present privilege is pass'd,

* The Consolation.

To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
The same astonishment will seize us all.
What then must pain us would preserve us now. 2400
Lorenzo ! 'tis not yet too late. Lorenzo !
Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise ;
That is, seize Wisdom ere she seizes thee.
For what, my small philosopher ! is hell ?
'Tis nothing but full knowledgo of the truth, 2405
When Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
And calls Eternity to do her right.
Thus darkness aiding intellectual light,
And sacred Silence whispering truths divine,
And truths divine converting pain to peace, 2410
My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,
Beyond the flaming limits of the world
Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
Of Fancy, when our hearts remain below ? 2415
Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes ;
'Tis pride to praise her, penance to perform.
To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
Lorenzo ! rise, at this auspicious hour,
An hour when Heaven's most intimate with man ;
When, like a falling star, the ray divine 2421
Glides swift into the bosom of the just ;
And just are all, determined to reclaim ;
Which sets that title high within thy reach.
Awake, then ; thy Philander calls : awake ! 2425
Thou, who shalt wake when the Creation sleeps ;
When, like a taper, all these suns expire ;
When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that support the world,
In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd, 2430
And midnight, universal midnight ! reigns.

THE FORCE OF RELIGION.

BOOK I.

FROM lofty themes, from thoughts that soar'd on high,
And open'd wondrous scenes above the sky,
My Muse! descend: indulge my fond desire;
With softer thoughts my melting soul inspire,
And smooth my numbers to a female's praise: 5
A partial world will listen to my lays
While Anna reigns, and sets a female name
Unrival'd in the glorious lists of fame.

Hear, ye fair daughters of this happy land!
Whose radiant eyes the vanquish'd world command,
Virtue is beauty; but when charms of mind 11
With elegance of outward form are join'd;
When youth makes such bright objects still more bright
And Fortune sets them in the strongest light,
'Tis all of heaven that we below may view, 15
And all but adoration is your due.

Famed female virtue did this isle adorn
Ere Ormond, or her glorious Queen was born:
When now Maria's powerful arms prevail'd,
And haughty Dudley's bold ambition fail'd, 20
The beautiful daughter of great Suffolk's race,
In blooming youth, adorn'd with every grace,
Who gain'd a crown by treason not her own,
And innocently fill'd another's throne,
Hurl'd from the summit of imperial state, 25
With equal mind sustain'd the stroke of Fate.

But how will Guilford, her far dearer part,
With manly reason fortify his heart?
At once she longs, and is afraid to know;
Now swift she moves, and now advances slow, 30
To find her lord; and, finding, passes by,
Silent with fear, nor dares she meet his eye,

Lest that, unask'd, in speechless grief disclose

The mournful secret of his inward woes :

Thus after sickness, doubtful of her face,

36

The melancholy virgin shuns the glass.

At length, with troubled thought, but look serene,

And sorrow soften'd by her heavenly mien,

She clasps her lord, brave, beautiful, and young,

While tender accents melt upon her tongue ;

40

Gentle and sweet, as vernal zephyr blows,

Fanning the lily, or the blooming rose :

' Grieve not, my lord ; a crown, indeed, is lost ;

What far outshines a crown we still may boast ;

A mind composed, a mind that can disdain

46

A fruitless sorrow for a loss so vain.

Nothing is loss that virtue can improve

To wealth eternal, and return above ;

Above, where no distinction shall be known

'Twixt him whom storms have shaken from a throne,

And him who, basking in the smiles of Fate,

51

Shone forth in all the splendour of the great :

Nor can I find the difference here below ;

I lately was a queen ; I still am so,

While Guilford's wife : thee rather I obey,

56

Than o'er mankind extend imperial sway.

When we lie down in some obscure retreat,

Incens'd Maria may her rage forget ;

And I to death my duty will improve,

And what you miss in empire, add in love—

60

Your godlike soul is open'd in your look,

And I have faintly your great meaning spoke.

For this alone I'm pleas'd I wore the crown,

To find with what content we lay it down.

Heroes may win, but 'tis a heavenly race

65

Can quit a throne with a becoming grace.'

Thus spoke the fairest of her sex, and cheer'd

Her drooping lord, whose boding bosom fear'd

A darker cloud of ills would burst, and shed

Severer vengeance on her guiltless head.

70

Too just, alas ! the terrors which he felt :
 For, lo ! a guard !—forgive him if he melt—
 How sharp her pangs, when sever'd from his side,
 'The most sincerely loved and loving bride
 In space confined, the Muse forbears to tell ;
 Deep was her anguish, but she bore it well :
 His pain was equal, but his virtue less ;
 He thought in grief there could be no excess.
 Pensive he sat, o'er cast with gloomy care,
 And often fondly clasp'd his absent fair ;
 Now, silent, wander'd through his rooms of state,
 And sicken'd at the pomp, and tax'd his fate,
 Which thus adorn'd, in all her shining store,
 A splendid wretch, magnificently poor.
 Now on the bridal bed his eyes were cast,
 And anguish fed on his enjoyments past ;
 Each recollected pleasure made him smart,
 And every transport stab'd him to the heart.
 That happy moon which summon'd to delight,
 That moon which shone on his dear nuptial night
 Which saw him fold her yet untasted charms
 (Denied to princes) in his longing arms,
 Now sees the transient blessing fleet away,
 Empire and love ! the vision of a day.

Thus, in the British clime, a summer storm
 Will oft the smiling face of heaven deform ;
 The winds with violence at once descend,
 Sweep flowers and fruits, and make the forest bend
 A sudden winter, while the Sun is near,
 O'ercomes the season, and inverts the year.

But whither is the captive borne away,
 The beautiful captive ! from the cheerful day ?
 The scene is changed indeed ; before her eyes
 Ill boding looks and unknown horrors rise :
 For pomp and splendour, for her guard and crown
 A gloomy dungeon, and a keeper's frown :
 Black thoughts each morn invade the lover's bower
 Each night a ruffian locks a queen to rest.

THE FORCE OF RELIGION

277

Ah, mournful change, if judged by vulgar minds !
But Suffolk's daughter its advantage finds. 110

Religion's force divine is best display'd
In deep desertion of all human aid ;
To succour in extremes is her delight,
And cheer the heart when terror strikes the sight.
We, disbelieving our own senses, gaze, 115

And wonder what a mortal's heart can raise
To triumph o'er misfortunes, smile in grief,
And comfort those who come to bring relief.
We gaze, and as we gaze, wealth, fame decay,
And all the world's vain glories fade away. 120

Against her cares she raised a dauntless mind,
And with an ardent heart, but most resign'd,
Deep in the dreadful gloom, with pious heat,
Amid the silence of her dark retreat,
Address'd her God—' Almighty Power Divine !' 125
'Tis thine to raise, and to depress is thine ;
With honour to light up the name unknown,
Or to put out the lustre of a throne.

In my short span both fortunes I have proved,
And though with ill frail nature will be moved, 130
I'll bear it well · (O strengthen me to bear !)

And if my piety may claim thy care,
If I remember'd, in youth's giddy heat,
And tumult of a court, a future state ;
O favour, when thy mercy I implore, 135
For one who never guilty sceptre bore !

'Twas I received the crown ; my lord is free ;
If it must fall, let vengeance fall on me :
Let him survive, his country's name to raise,
And in a guilty land to speak thy praise ! 140

O may the' indulgence of a father's love,
Pour'd forth on me, be doubled from above !
If these are safe, I'll think my prayers succeed,
And bless thy tender mercies whilst I bleed.

Though rigid justice rush'd into offence,
 And drank, in zeal, the blood of Innocence.
 'The Sun went down in clouds, and seem'd to mourn
 The sad necessity of his return ; 150
 The hollow wind and melancholy rain,
 Or did, or was imagined to complain ;
 The tapers cast an inauspicious light ;
 Stars there were none, and doubly dark the night.

Sweet Innocence in chains can take her rest ; 155
 Soft slumber gently creeping through her breast,
 She sinks ; and in her sleep is reenthroned,
 Mock'd by a gaudy dream, and vainly crown'd.
 She views her fleets and armies, seas and land,
 And stretches wide her shadow of command : 160
 With royal purple is her vision hung ;
 By phantom hosts are shouts of conquest rung ,
 Low at her feet the suppliant rival lies :
 Our prisoner mourns her fate, and bids her rise.

Now level beams upon the waters play'd, 165
 Glanced on the hills, and westward cast the shade ;
 'The busy trades in city had began
 'To sound and speak the painful life of man.
 In tyrants' breasts the thoughts of vengeance rouse,
 And the fond bridegroom turns him to his spouse. 170
 At this first birth of light, while morning breaks,
 Our spouseless bride, or widow'd wife, awakes ;
 Awakes, and smiles ; nor night's imposture blames ;
 Her real pomps were little more than dreams ;
 A short-lived blaze, a lightning quickly o'er, 175
 That died in birth, that shone, and were no more :
 She turns her side, and soon resumes a state
 Of mind well suited to her alter'd fate,
 Serene, though serious, when dread tidings come
 (Ah, wretched Guilford !) of her instant doom. 180
 Sun ! hide thy beams ; in clouds as black as night
 Thy face involve ; be guiltless of the sight ;
 Or haste more swiftly to the western main,
 Nor let her blood the conscious day-light stain !

THE FORCE OF RELIGION.

279

Oh ! how severe ! to fall so new a bride, 185
 Yet blushing from the priest, in youthful pride ;
 When Time had just matured each perfect grace,
 And open'd all the wonders of her face !
 To leave her Guilford dead to all relief,
 Fond of his woe and obstinate in grief. 190
 Unhappy Fair ! whatever Fancy drew,
 (Vain promised blessings) vanish from her view *
 No train of cheerful days, endearing nights,
 No sweet domestic joys, and chaste delights ;
 Pleasures that blossom e'en from doubts and fears,
 And bliss and rapture rising out of cares : 196
 No little Guilford, with paternal grace,
 Lull'd on her knee, or smiling in her face ;
 Who, when her dearest father shall return
 From pouring tears on her untimely urn, 200
 Might comfort to his silver hairs impart,
 And fill her place in his indulgent heart :
 As where fruits fall quick-rising blossoms smile,
 And the blest Indian of his cares beguile.
 In vain these various reasons jointly press 205
 To blacken death, and heighten her distress ;
 She through the' encircling terrors darts her sight
 To the bless'd regions of eternal light,
 And fills her soul with peace : to weeping friends
 Her father and her lord she recommends, 210
 Unmov'd herself : her foes her air survey,
 And rage to see their malice thrown away.
 She soars ; now nought on earth detains her care—
 But Guilford, who still struggles for his share.
 Still will his form importunately rise, 215
 Clog and retard her transport to the skies.
 As trembling flames now take a feeble flight,
 Now catch the brand with a returning light,
 Thus her soul onward, from the seats above
 Falls fondly back, and kindles into love. 220
 At length she conquers in the doubtful field ;
 That Heaven she seeks will be her Guilford's shi

Now Death is welcome ; his approach is slow ;
'Tis tedious longer to expect the blow.

Oh, mortals ! short of sight, who think the past 225
O'erblown misfortune still shall prove the last :
Alas ! misfortunes travel in a train,
And oft in life form one perpetual chain :
Fear buries fear, and ills on ills attend,
Till life and sorrow meet one common end. 230

She thinks that she has nought but death to fear ;
And death is conquer'd. Worse than death is near :
Her rigid trials are not yet complete ;
The news arrives of her great father's fate.
She sees his hoary head, all white with age, 235
A victim to the' offended monarch's rage.
How great the mercy, had she breathed her last
Ere the dire sentence on her father pass'd !

A fonder parent Nature never know,
And as his age increased his fondness grew. 240
A parent's love ne'er better was bestow'd ;
The pious daughter in her heart o'erflow'd.
And can she from all weakness still refrain ?
And still the firmness of her soul maintain ?—
Impossible ! a sigh will force its way, 245
One patient tear her mortal birth betray ;
She sighs and weeps ! but so she weeps and sighs,
As silent dews descend, and vapours rise.

Celestial Patience ! how dost thou defeat
The 'oe's proud menace, and elude his hate ! 250
While Passion takes his part, betrays our peace
To death and torture swells each slight disgrace ;
By not opposing thou dost ills destroy,
And wear thy conquer'd sorrows into joy.

Now she revolves within her anxious mind 255
What woe still lingers in reserve behind.

*Griefs rise on griefs, and she can see no bound,
While nature lasts, and can receive a wound.
The sword is drawn ; the queen to rage inclin'd,
By mercy nor by piety confined.*

What mercy can the zealot's heart assuage,
 Whose piety itself converts to rage ?
 She thought, and sigh'd ; and now the blood began
 To leave her beauteous cheek all cold and wan :
 New sorrow dimm'd the lustre of her eye, 265
 And on her cheek the fading roses die.
 Alas ! should Guilford too—When now she's brought
 To that dire view, that precipice of thought,
 While there she trembling stands, nor dares look down,
 Nor can recede, till Heaven's decrees are known, 270
 Cure of all ills, till now, her lord appears—
 But not to cheer her heart, and dry her tears ?
 Not now, as usual, like the rising day,
 To chase the shadows and the damps away ;
 But like a gloomy storm, at once to sweep 275
 And plunge her to the bottom of the deep.
 Black were his robes, dejected was his air,
 His voice was frozen by his cold despair ;
 Slow, like a ghost, he moved with solemn pace ;
 A dying paleness sat upon his face :— 280
 Back she recoil'd, she smote her lovely breast,
 Her eyes the anguish of her heart confess'd :
 Struck to the soul, she stagger'd with the wound,
 And sunk, a breathless image, to the ground.
 Thus the fair lily, when the sky's o'ercast, 285
 At first but shudders in the feeble blast ;
 But when the winds and weighty rains descend,
 The fair and upright stem is forced to bend,
 Till broke, at length, its snowy leaves are shed,
 And strew with dying sweets their native bed. 290

BOOK II.

HER Guilford clasps her, beautiful in death,
 And with a kiss recalls her fleeting breath :
 To tapers thus, which by a blast expire,
 A lighted taper, touch'd, restores the fire.

She rear'd her swarming eye, and saw the light, 5
 And Guilford, too, or she had leath'd the sight.
 Her father's death she bore, despised her own,
 But now she must, she will, have leave to grieve.
 'Ah! Guilford!' she began, and would have spoke,
 But sobs rush'd in, and every accent broke : 10
 Reason itself, as gusts of passion blew,
 Was ruffled in the tempest, and withdrew.

So the youth lost his image in the well,
 When tears upon the yielding surface fell ;
 The scatter'd features slid into decay, 15
 And spreading circles drove his face away.

To touch the soft affections, and control
 The manly temper of the bravest soul,
 What with afflicted beauty can compare,
 And drops of love distilling from the fair ? 20
 It melts us down ; our pains delight bestow,
 And we with fondness languish o'er our woe.

This Guilford proved ; and, with excess of pain,
 And pleasure too, did to his bosom strain
 The weeping fair : sunk deep in soft desire, 25
 Indulged in love, and nursed the raging fire ;
 Then tore himself away ; and, standing wide,
 As fearing a relapse of fondness, cried,
 With ill-dissembled grief, ' My life ! forbear ;
 You wound your Guilford with each cruel tear : 30
 Did you not chide my grief ? repress your own,
 Nor want compassion for yourself alone.

Have you beheld how, from the distant main,
 The thronging waves roll on, a numerous train,
 And foam, and bellow, till they reach the shore, 35
 There burst their noisy pride, and are no more ?

Thus the successive flows of human race,
 Chased by the coming, the preceeding chase ;

*They sound and swell, their haughty heads they rear,
 Then fall and flatten, break and disappear.* 40

*Life is a forfeit we must shortly pay,
 And where's the mighty lucre of a day ?*

y should you mourn my fate? 'tis most unkind;
 or own you bore with an unshaken mind:
 l which, can you imagine, was the dart 45
 at drank most blood, sunk deepest in my heart?
 nnot live without you; and my doom
 eet with joy, to share one common tomb.—
 l are again your tears profusely spill'd?
 ! then, my kindness blackens to my guilt! 50
 oils itself if it recal your pain:—
 of my life! I beg you to refrain:
 load which Fate imposes you increase,
 l help Maria to destroy my peace.
 ut, oh! against himself his labour turn'd; 55
 more he comforted the more she mourn'd.
 passion swells our grief; words soft and kind
 sooth our weakness, and dissolve the mind.
 sorrow flew'd in streams; nor hers alone;
 He that he blamed, he yielded to his own. 60
 ere are the smiles she wore when she, so late,
 d him great partner of the regal state;
 en orient gems around her temples blazed,
 bending nations on the glory gazed?
 'tis now the queen's command they both retreat 65
 eep with dignity, and mourn in state:
 forms the decent misery with joy,
 leads with pomp the wretch she would destroy.
 acious hall is hung with black, all light
 : out, and noon-day darken'd into night: 70
 n the mid-roof a lamp depends on high,
 : a dim crescent in a clouded sky;
 eds a quivering, melancholy gloom,
 ch only shows the darkness of the room.
 ining axe is on the table laid, 75
 eadful sight! and glitters through the shade.
this sad scene the lovers are confin'd,
no of terrors to a guilty mind!
ne that would have damp'd with rising cares

What can they do? they fix their mournful eyes—

Then Guilford thus, abruptly: 'I despise

An empire lost; I fling away the crown;

Numbers have laid that bright delusion down;

But where's the Charles, or Dioclesian where, 85

Could quit the blooming, wedded, weeping fair?

Oh! to dwell ever on thy lip! to stand

In full possession of thy snowy hand!

And, through the' unclouded crystal of thy eye,

The heavenly treasures of thy mind to spy! 90

Till rapture reason happily destroys,

And my soul wanders through immortal joys!

Give me the world, and ask me, 'Where's my bliss?

I clasp thee to my breast, and answer *This*.

And shall the grave'—He groans, and can no more, 95

But all her charms in silence traces o'er;

Her lip, her cheek, and eye, to wonder wrought,

And wondering sees, in sad presaging thought,

From that fair neck, that world of beauty, fall,

And roll along the dust, a ghastly ball! 100

Oh! let those tremble who are greatly bless'd!

For who but Guilford could be thus distress'd?

Come hither, all you happy! all you great!

From flowery meadows, and from rooms of state;

Nor think I call your pleasures to destroy, 105

But to refine, and to exalt your joy:

Weep not; but, smiling, fix your ardent care

On nobler titles than the brave or fair.

Was ever such a mournful, moving sight?

See, if you can, by that dim, trembling light: 110

Now they embrace; and, mix'd with bitter woe,

Like Isis and her Thames, one stream they flow:

Now they start wide; fix'd in benumbing care,

They stiffen into statues of despair:

Now tenderly severe and fiercely kind, 115

They rush at once; they fling their cares behind,

And clasp, as if to death; new vows repeat,

And meet their fate:

A short delusion ; for the raging pain
Returns, and their poor hearts must bleed again. 120

Meantime, the queen new cruelty decreed ;
But ill content that they should only bleed,
A priest is sent, who, with insidious art,
Instils his poison into Suffolk's heart,
And Guilford drank it : hanging on the breast, 125
He from his childhood was with Rome possess'd.

When now the ministers of Death draw nigh,
And in her dearest lord she first must die,
The subtle priest, who long had watch'd to find
The most unguarded passes of her mind, 130
Bespoke her thus : ' Grieve not ; 'tis in your power
Your lord to rescue from this fatal hour.'

Her bosom pants ; she draws her breath with pain ;
A sudden horror thrills through every vein ;
Life seems suspended, on his words intent, 135
And her soul trembles for the great event.

The priest proceeds : ' Embrace the faith of Rome,
And ward your own, your lord's, and father's doom.'

Ye blessed spirits ! now your charge sustain :
The past was ease : now first she suffers pain. 140

Must she pronounce her father's death ? must she
Bid Guilford bleed ?—It must not, cannot be.

It cannot be ! but 'tis the Christian's praise,
Above impossibilities to raise

The weakness of our nature, and deride 145
Of vain philosophy, the boasted pride.

What though our feeble sinews scarce impart

A moment's swiftness to the feather'd dart ;

Though tainted air our vigorous youth can break,
And a chill blast the hardy warrior shake ? 150

Yet are we strong ; hear the loud tempest roar
From east to west, and call us weak no more :

The lightning's unresisted force proclaims

Our might, and thunders raise our humble names.

'Tis our Jehovah fills the heavens ; as long
As he shall reign Almighty, we are strong :

We, by devotion, borrow from his throne,
 And almost make Omnipotence our own :
 We force the gates of heaven by fervent prayer,
 And call forth triumph out of man's despair. 16

Our lovely mourner, kneeling, lifts her eyes
 And bleeding heart, in silence, to the skies,
 Devoutly sad—then, brightening, like the day,
 When sudden winds sweep scatter'd clouds away,
 Shining in majesty, till now unknown, 16
 And breathing life and spirit scarce her own,
 She, rising, speaks ; ' If these the terms—'

Here Guilford, cruel Guilford ! (barbarous man !
 Is this thy love ?) as swift as lightning ran,
 O'erwhelm'd her, with tempestuous sorrow fraught,
 And stifled, in its birth, the mighty thought : 17
 Then, bursting fresh into a flood of tears,
 Fierce, resolute, delirious with his fears,
 His fears for her alone, he beat his breast,
 And thus the fervour of his soul express'd : 17

Oh ! let thy thought o'er our past converse rove,
 And show one moment uninflamed with love !
 Oh ! if thy kindness can no longer last,
 In pity to thyself forget the past !
 Else wilt thou never, void of shame and fear, 18
 Pronounce his doom whom thou hast held so dear :
 Thou, who hast took me to thy arms, and swore
 Empires were vile, and Fate could give no more ;
 That to continue was its utmost power,
 And make the future like the present hour : 18
 Now call a ruffian, bid his cruel sword
 Lay wide the bosom of thy worthless lord :
 Transfix his heart (since you its love disclaim)
 And stain his honour with a traitor's name.

This might perhaps be borne without remorse, 1
 But sure a father's pangs will have their force !
 Shall his good age, so near its journey's end,
 Through cruel torment to the grave descend ?

His shallow blood all issue at a wound,
 Wash a slave's feet, and smoke upon the ground ? 195
 But he to you has ever been severe ;

Then take your vengeance'—Suffolk now drew near,
 Bending beneath the burden of his care,

His robes neglected and his head was bare :

Decrepit Winter, in the yearly ring, 200

Thus slowly creeps to meet the blooming Spring :

Downward he cast a melancholy look,

Thrice turn'd to hide his grief, then faintly spoke :—

' Now deep in years, and forward in decay,

That axe can only rob me of a day : 205

For thee, my soul's desire ! I can't refrain ;

And shall my tears, my last tears, flow in vain ?

When you shall know a mother's tender name,

My heart's distress no longer will you blame.'

At this, afar his bursting groans were heard ; 210

The tears ran trickling down his silver beard :

He snatch'd her hand, which to his lips he press'd,

And bid her ' plant a dagger in his breast ;'

Then, sinking, call'd ' her piety unjust,'

And soil'd his hoary temples in the dust. 215

Hard-hearted men ! will you no mercy know ?

Has the queen bribed you to distress her foe ?

O weak deserters to Misfortune's part,

By false affection thus to pierce her heart !

When she had soar'd, to let your arrows fly, 220

And fetch her bleeding from the middle sky.

And can her virtue, springing from the ground,

Her flight recover, and disdain the wound,

When cleaving love and human interest bind

The broken force of her aspiring mind ? 225

As round the generous eagle, which in vain

Exerts her strength, the serpent wreaths his train,

Her struggling wings entangles, curling plies

His poisonous tail, and stings her as she flies.

*While yet the blow's first dreadful weight she feels
 And with its force her resolution reels,*

Large doors, unfolding with a mournful sound
 To view discover, weltering on the ground,
 'Three headless trunks of those whose arms maintain'd,
 And in her wars immortal glory gain'd : 235
 The lifted axe assured her ready doom,
 And silent mourners sadden'd all the room :—
 Shall I proceed, or here break off my tale,
 Nor truths to stagger human faith reveal ?

She met this utmost malice of her fate 240
 With Christian dignity and pious state ;
 'The beating storm's propitious rage she bless'd,
 And all the martyr triumph'd in her breast.
 Her lord and father, for a moment's space,
 She strictly folded in her soft embrace ! 245
 'Then thus she spoke, while angels heard on high,
 And sudden gladness smiled along the sky :

'Your over-sondness has not moved my hate ;
 I am well pleased you make my death so great :
 I joy I cannot save you, and have given 250
 Two lives, much dearer than my own, to Heaven,
 If so the queen decrees.*—But I have cause
 'To hope my blood will satisfy the laws ;
 If there is mercy still, for you, in store :
 With me the bitterness of death is o'er ; 255
 He shot his sting in that farewell embrace,
 And all, that is to come, is joy and peace.

'Then let mistaken sorrow be suppress'd,
 Nor seem to envy my approaching rest.'
 Then, turning to the ministers of Fate, 260
 She, smiling, says, 'My victory's complete ;
 And tell your queen I thank her for the blow,
 And grieve my gratitude I cannot show.

A poor return I leave in England's crown,
 For everlasting pleasure and renown : 265

*Her guilt alone allays this happy hour ;
 Her guilt,—the only vengeance in her power !*

*Not Rome, untouch'd with sorrow, heard her fate,
 And fierce Maria pitied her too late.*



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